

Perineal urethrostomy (PU)

Animal Surgical Care of Michigan

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Overview: A perineal urethrostomy is a surgical procedure performed in male cats that have developed an obstruction in the narrow penile urethra. This obstruction often occurs in cats with Feline Urologic Syndrome (inflammation) and consists of mucous plugs, grit, or even small stones that formed in the bladder. It is also less commonly performed in male cats with a urethral tear secondary to trauma.

Signs/symptoms: Cats may present for straining to urinate or have blood in their urine. In advanced cases, they become dehydrated, vomit, and become extremely lethargic. Left untreated, the bladder may rupture and the cat can die. If there is a urethral obstruction present, many times your cat can be “unblocked” by passing a urinary catheter while he is under anesthesia. The bladder and urethra are flushed to try to prevent the cat from re-blocking. If this condition recurs in the short term or even long term (weeks to months later), a catheter cannot be passed, or a urethral tear is present, a perineal urethrostomy is recommended.

Diagnosis: Diagnosis of a urethral obstruction is made on palpation of the bladder and an inability to express it. Radiographs (x-rays) are taken as well to evaluate whether concurrent bladder stones are present. Bloodwork should also be run as some cats with urinary tract obstructions have temporary or permanent kidney damage.

Treatment: A perineal urethrostomy involves removal of the narrow penile portion of the urethra. A new urethral opening is created for the wider pelvic urethra, allowing small grit and mucous to pass. It is important to note that it does not prevent these this grit/stones/mucous from forming.

If bladder stones are present, a cystotomy may need to be performed as well.

Aftercare/outcome: Bleeding at the surgery site is a relatively common postop complication and your cat may need to be hospitalized for a day or two following surgery. The surgery site should not be cleaned/disturbed. Cats must wear an Elizabethan collar to prevent them from licking at their surgery site or prematurely removing sutures. They will need to be sedated to have the sutures removed once the site is healed.

Cats should continue to eat a special diet formulated to help prevent urethral obstruction in the future. They are more prone to urinary tract infections than they were before surgery. In rare cases, the site can stricture and re-obstruction can occur.

Please refer to the American College of Veterinary Surgeons website

www.acvs.org for additional information or call Dr. Boswell at 269-312-4227