



Midvalley Animal Clinic 6047 South Redwood Road
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This handout provides an overview of **feline hyperthyroidism**, a common condition in middle-aged and senior cats caused by an overproduction of thyroid hormone.

Signs and Symptoms

Hyperthyroidism is often called the "great masquerader" because its symptoms can look like other diseases. Look for these common red flags:

- **Weight Loss:** Often despite a ravenous appetite (**polyphagia**).
 - **Increased Thirst and Urination:** Noticing more clumps in the litter box.
 - **Coat Changes:** A greasy, matted, or unkempt appearance.
 - **Behavioral Changes:** Increased activity, restlessness, or vocalizing (especially at night).
 - **Gastrointestinal Issues:** Occasional vomiting or diarrhea.
 - **Rapid Heart Rate:** You may feel your cat's heart racing or notice "panting" after minimal exertion.
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Treatment Options

There are four primary ways to manage hyperthyroidism. While we provide medical and dietary management, advanced options like I-131 and surgery are performed at specialty centers.

1. Radioactive Iodine Therapy (I-131)

- **How it works:** A single injection of radioactive iodine destroys only the abnormal thyroid tissue.
- **Pros:** Considered the "gold standard"; usually a permanent cure with no daily meds.
- **Cons:** Requires a short hospital stay at a specialized facility.

2. Life-long Medication (Methimazole)

- **How it works:** An oral tablet or a transdermal gel (applied to the inner ear) that blocks hormone production.
- **Pros:** Inexpensive upfront and managed right here at our clinic.
- **Cons:** Requires once or twice-daily dosing for life and regular bloodwork monitoring.



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3. Prescription Diet

- **How it works:** A strictly iodine-deficient diet (like Hill's y/d) limits the thyroid's ability to produce hormone.
- **Pros:** No medication or surgery required.
- **Cons:** The cat **cannot** eat any other food, treats, or hunted prey.

4. Surgery (Thyroidectomy)

- **How it works:** Surgical removal of the affected thyroid gland(s).
- **Pros:** Can be a permanent cure.
- **Cons:** Involves anesthesia risks and requires a specialized surgeon.

Specialty Referral Options

While we provide comprehensive diagnosis and medical management, we do not offer **I-131 (Radioiodine)** or **specialty thyroid surgery** at our facility. If you choose these advanced options, we recommend the following local specialty clinics:

- [Sage Veterinary Imaging - Sandy](#)
- [VCA Mountain View Animal Hospital](#)

Ongoing Monitoring & Follow-up

Managing hyperthyroidism requires a partnership between you and your veterinary team. Consistent monitoring ensures your cat's dose or diet is effective and safe.

- **Initial Monitoring:** After starting medication or a prescription diet, additional bloodwork is required to monitor thyroid levels and ensure the treatment is working correctly.
- **Kidney Health:** Once thyroid levels are stabilized, we will perform a **full blood panel**. It is critical to monitor kidney values, as treating hyperthyroidism can sometimes reveal underlying kidney disease that was "masked" by the high thyroid levels.
- **Long-term Care:** These labs should be repeated **annually**, or sooner if your cat shows any signs of illness or new concerns.



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Consultation

If you have additional concerns or questions regarding these treatment paths, we recommend scheduling a **consultation with your doctor**. We are here to help you choose the best plan for your cat's specific needs and lifestyle.

For more detailed information, you can review the [Hyperthyroidism Treatment Options in Cats](#) guide provided by Veterinary Partner.

