

Mountain View Animal Hospital

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Abscess Treatment and Aftercare

Abscesses are quite common in cats and are seen with less frequency in dogs. In cats, they are most commonly found in association with a bite or scratch wound from fighting with other cats. Abscesses are local infections and can make the animal feel ill. They may have a decreased appetite, vomiting, fever or lethargy.

Treatment

The therapy for an abscess is to clip the hair from around the wound and clean it well. The abscess is then lanced and a drainage hole is created in order to keep it from filling up with pus again. Often there is a large amount of pus within the abscess, but sometimes the abscess is old enough that it forms a chronic wound and cellulitis (inflammation of the tissue under the skin). The wound is then flushed with antiseptic solution and thoroughly cleaned out. Typically the animal is given an injection of antibiotic before surgery and is then sent home with oral antibiotics to be continued at home to prevent further infection of the wound.

Home Care

The goal after draining the abscess is to prevent it from closing up too quickly. Normal wound healing will create a scab that will prevent drainage from the wound. It is imperative to maintain good drainage for several days after lancing an abscess or it may fill up with pus again. Use the provided syringe to flush the wound with hydrogen peroxide twice daily for several days. Insert the tip of the syringe directly into the opening of the abscess. If a scab forms too soon, simply pull it off and continue flushing. If you were sent home with antibiotics, give them until they are completely finished.

Specific Instructions
