

Mammary Carcinoma in Cats

Oncology Service



Michigan Veterinary Specialistssm

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We Can Help

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Locations

Auburn Hills

3412 E. Walton Blvd.
(West of Squirrel Rd.)
(248) 371-3713

Grand Rapids

1425 Michigan St. NE
(East of Fuller Rd.)
(616) 284-5300

Southfield

29080 Inkster Rd.
(North of 12 Mile Rd.)
(248) 354-6660

Symptoms

Mammary carcinoma is a common tumor in the cat that develops from mammary (breast) tissue. The first sign of this type of cancer may be a fluid filled or firm lump associated with the mammary gland or discharge originating from the nipple. These masses do not tend to be painful but can be associated with increased grooming behavior if discharge is present.



Diagnosis

A needle aspiration of the affected tissue may be adequate to diagnose mammary carcinoma, however biopsy may be necessary in some instances. The majority of mammary tumors in cats are malignant in nature and very likely to metastasize, spread to other locations, early in the course of the disease. The most common locations for tumor metastasis are the lymph nodes in the area and the lungs. Prior to any biopsy or treatment, palpation of those local lymph nodes and chest x-rays are recommended to look for evidence of metastasis. Blood work to evaluate organ function is also recommended.

Treatment

Designing a treatment strategy for a patient with mammary carcinoma requires attention to two aspect of the disease. The first aspect is to achieve control of the primary tumor, and the second is to improve the patient's lifespan. With this in mind, the treatment for mammary carcinoma typically involves surgery to remove the affected chain of mammary glands followed by injectable chemotherapy to treat any cancerous cells that have already metastasized.

Many people are nervous about the side effects that may occur with chemotherapy; however, the protocols administered at MVS have been developed to be effective while minimizing side effects to your pet. Therefore, most feline patients at MVS tolerate chemotherapy exceptionally well and do not have any side effects. The protocols often utilize doses that are lower than those used in human medicine, allowing cats to maintain an **excellent quality of life** throughout treatment.

Cost

The cost of treatment is based on what type of surgery and/or chemotherapy drugs are recommended. During your evaluation at MVS, the oncologist will have an extensive discussion with you about your pet and what treatments will be most appropriate. You will then be provided with the estimated costs involved with diagnosis and treatment.

Again, the goals that are always kept in mind are to maintain your pet's quality of life and to give them as much time with you as possible. We look forward to helping you at MVS!