
**Abstract**

Urination and defecation outside the litter box is one of the most common behavior problems reported by cat caretakers and the most common behavioral reason that results in the relinquishment of cats to shelters. A physical examination, laboratory tests, and a thorough behavioral history are necessary to differentiate between the diagnoses of disease, marking, and inappropriate elimination. This study followed up on the outcome of cats who were treated for inappropriate elimination. Fifty-eight caregivers completed a telephone questionnaire 12 to 54 months after treatment was initiated. Twenty-seven (47%) of caregivers felt their cat was cured, 15 (26%) felt their cat was much better, 8 (14%) slightly better, 6 (10%) the same, and 2 (3%) worse. Forty caregivers (67%) observed a 90% to 100% reduction in frequency. There was a significant association between the caregivers’ perception of treatment outcome and percentage reduction in frequency. There was a significant association between caregivers’ compliance and outcome. The results of this study give caregivers a valid and promising alternative to relinquishment for inappropriate elimination problems.

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