1. **My cat is urinating around the house**.

* First we recommend that you have your cat checked by your veterinarian to make sure there isn't a medical reason for the behaviour. Some medical issues that can cause this behaviour include Diabetes, Crystals, Kidney Stones, Hyperthyroidism, Renal Failure, Cystitis, Urinary Tract Infections, Irritable bowels, Constipation, Impacted Anal Glands, Megacolon. They do this because it can be painful to go to the bathroom, they may have to eliminate often and cannot make it to the box in time, some cats eliminate as soon as they feel discomfort. Signs that could indicate a medical issue include; straining to eliminate; having blood or discolouration of the urine/feces; very hard or loose stools; vocalizing while eliminating; frequent trips to the litter box; avoiding the litter box.

**If your vet determines that there are no medical reasons for the house soiling the next steps are:**

* **Check the litter box set up**. The cat may dislike the set up because of things such as: the litter is dirty; it's in a bad location; maybe the cat doesn't like the type of litter (clay vs clumping, scented vs unscented); maybe the cat doesn't like the litter box itself (sides too high?, covered?, too small of a litter box?, are you using litter box liners? The cat may need more than one litter box. Maybe the box is too close to the cat's food and water. Maybe the box is in a high traffic or noisy area.
* If you have more than one cat there should be at least one box/cat and the litter box size should be at least 1.5 times the size of the cat with sides that are easy to climb.
* Litter boxes should be in a quiet area where the cat will not be startled, yet easy for the cat to access. It should not be near appliances, furnaces that can turn on/off. If the house has more than one floor, there should be a litter box on each floor.
* The litter box should be scooped twice/day and thoroughly cleaned every 10-14 days.
* **Has the cat been spay/neutered?**
* **Clean any soiled areas with an enzymatic urine cleaner.**

**Some cats avoid the litter box due to environmental stressors- Examples include;**

* A new baby in the house
* Outdoor cats
* New routines
* New people/animals
* New smells
* Loss of family member (human or animal)
* New sounds (e.g. construction in the area)
* New objects in the house (e.g. furniture)
* Being let outdoors
* Cats might eliminate in a different part of the home to restore their scent if they do not feel safe and secure. They may do it to mask an unfamiliar scent. They may choose to eliminate on something that has their owners scent on it because blending their scent with their owners' comforts them.
* If the cat is going near a window or doors leading to the outside, the source of the stress is likely coming from outside the home.
* If the cat is going in other areas of the home, that area is likely where the cat is experiencing the stress.

**Advice includes:**

* Keep the cat indoors
* If the source of the stress can be identified and removed then do so. (e.g. seeing a cat outside-close the curtains/blinds) or (if guests scar the cat then confine the cat in a comfortable room when guests arrive)
* If the source of the stress cannot be removed (e.g. a new baby-help the cat gradually get more comfortable with the stressor by engaging the cat in play and offering favourite treats/food near the source of the stress, this will help the cat associate positive things with the new baby instead of a negative experience.
* Make sure the cat is engaged in interactive play and has environmental enrichment which will help reduce their stress (e.g. toys).
* Provide the cat with areas they will consider safe (e.g. hiding spaces and high resting spaces and a safe room).

**Multi Cat Homes**

* Cats are territorial. Problems can occur if they feel they are in competition with another cat for resources or they feel they don't have enough space. Cats have a hierarchy system and it can lead to bullying/jockeying for position. This can result in on cat keeping another cat from using the litter box or spraying in the home.

**Advice Includes:**

* Make sure all the cats in the home have been spay/neutered.
* Make sure there is at least one box/cat, then add one more.
* Litter boxes should be large, open boxes.
* Place the boxes in different areas of the home.
* Make sure the cat has multiple escape routes and can see all around the area.
* Provide lots of high resting areas in the home to increase the amount of territory and the cats will not feel they are in competition with each other for space.
* Have more than enough resources for the cats so they don't feel like they are in competition for them. (e.g. multiple litter boxes, scratching posts, high resting areas, food/water bowls, toys, playtime and one-on-one time with the people in the home.
* Work on creating positive interactions among the cats (e.g. providing favourite treats/food when they are around each other).