

SOFT TISSUE INJURIES IN CATS

Sprains, strains and ligament injuries can cause pain and limit your cat's movement and comfort.

Early assessment and appropriate treatment give your cat the best chance of a full recovery and help prevent further injury.



PAIN CAN
BE SUBTLE –
DON'T DELAY
SEEKING HELP.

? WHAT IS A SOFT TISSUE INJURY?

Soft tissue injuries affect muscles, tendons, ligaments and the surrounding connective tissues in your cat.

They can occur suddenly after trauma or develop gradually from overuse.

Any lameness or change in movement should be checked by a vet.



! Rest may help mild injuries, but some need veterinary care. Never give human pain relief unless prescribed by your vet.

💡 DID YOU KNOW?

- Cats are excellent at hiding pain. You may not see obvious signs.
- Some injuries heal with rest and rehabilitation, while others need surgery.
- Early treatment can reduce pain and speed up recovery.
- Re-injury is common if the injury is not fully healed.



COMMON CAUSES



Falls and jumps from heights



Overexertion or strenuous activity



Twisting or awkward landings



Slippery surfaces or rough terrain



Poor conditioning or older age

Common injuries include muscle strains, ligament sprains or tears, tendon injuries and bruising.

1 RECOGNISE THE SIGNS

Watch for any changes in your cat, including:

- Limping or favouring a leg
- Stiffness or reluctance to move
- Reduced activity or play
- Difficulty jumping up or down
- Swelling, heat or tenderness
- Muscle tightness or spasms
- Licking or biting the sore area
- Changes in gait or posture



! If symptoms are severe or don't improve within 24 hours, see your vet.

2 HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

Your veterinarian will:

- Perform a thorough physical and orthopaedic examination
- Assess your cat's gait and range of motion
- Check for pain, swelling or instability
- May recommend imaging such as X-rays or ultrasound
- Discuss your cat's activity and recent events



Accurate diagnosis helps determine the best treatment and recovery plan.

3 TREATMENT OPTIONS

Treatment depends on the type and severity of the injury.

- Rest and activity restriction
- Pain relief and anti-inflammatories
- Cold therapy (early) then heat therapy (later)
- Physiotherapy and controlled rehabilitation
- Supportive bandaging or bracing if needed
- Surgery may be required for severe tears or instability



Follow your vet's instructions carefully and complete all recommended treatment.

4 AT HOME CARE

Help your cat heal by:

- Keeping your cat quiet and confined as advised
- Provide a comfortable, warm resting area
- Use a litter box with low sides
- Prevent jumping on/off furniture or high places
- Use ramps or steps if needed
- Monitor for swelling or pain



! Do not allow off-lead exercise or play until your vet says it is safe.

5 REHABILITATION & RECOVERY

A gradual approach helps your cat return to normal activity:

- Follow your vet's rehabilitation plan
- Gentle range of motion exercises as advised
- Physiotherapy (laser, massage, hydrotherapy) can aid healing
- Increase activity slowly – too soon can cause re-injury
- Most soft tissue injuries take several weeks to months to fully heal



Patience and consistency are key to a strong, lasting recovery.

6 PREVENTION TIPS

Help reduce the risk of soft tissue injuries:

- Keep your cat indoors or in a secure outdoor enclosure
- Provide safe, enriching environments
- Use non-slip mats on slippery floors
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Encourage regular, gentle play
- Check paws and nails regularly
- Use proper equipment for transport and handling



7 WHEN TO SEE YOUR VET URGENTLY

Seek immediate veterinary attention if:

- Your cat cannot put weight on a leg
- There is severe pain or swelling
- There is a 'pop' or sudden injury
- The limb looks deformed
- There is muscle spasming or collapse
- Symptoms worsen or do not improve within 24 hours



Quick treatment improves outcomes and reduces the risk of long-term damage.

8 RECOVERY REMINDERS



Follow your vet's plan carefully



Rest today for a stronger tomorrow



Rehab helps restore strength and function



Complete treatment for the best results

With time, care and the right treatment, most cats make a full recovery.

9 THE GOOD NEWS

Most soft tissue injuries heal well with appropriate care.

- Early diagnosis
- Pain management
- Controlled rest
- Rehabilitation
- And a gradual return to activity

Help your cat get back to doing what they love – pain free!

