A cat owners guide to radioactive iodine therapy at Willows

The safe and effective choice for treating hyperthyroidism in cats

Committed to excellence
Radioactive iodine has been used to treat hyperthyroidism in people for over fifty years. Radioactive iodine therapy is a safe and effective choice for treating hyperthyroidism in most cats with a success rate of 95%. It is an easy injection just under the skin, much like a routine feline vaccine.

What are the benefits of Radioactive Iodine therapy?

- Radioactive Iodine ($^{131}$I) does not damage other tissue or organs, including the parathyroid glands
- Does not destroy healthy tissue
- Does not have harmful side effects
- In successful cases can return thyroid function to normal, usually within one month
- No anaesthetic is required
- Cost effective
- No daily medication administration which could diminish the pet owner bond if your pet does not like taking oral medication.

Is my cat eligible for this treatment?

To be a candidate for radioactive iodine therapy, all cats must ideally have screening laboratory blood work, thyroid hormone analysis and urinalysis at their referring vets, both at the time of initial diagnosis and when they are stable on treatment. Cats should be stabilised/trialed on oral medication to assess the potential for unmasking renal disease that may have been concealed by the hyperthyroidism. Cats with chronic renal (kidney) failure and/or advanced heart disease are not candidates for radioactive iodine therapy. Also, cats who are excessively aggressive are unfortunately not suitable for the treatment.

If the laboratory findings indicate stable renal function in a well-controlled hyperthyroid patient while being given medication, then there is a greater probability the patient will have stable renal function following $^{131}$I therapy.

Blood work, urinalysis and blood pressure is performed at the initial appointment at Willows to ensure that your cat is in good health and so that we can accurately give the correct dose of radioactive iodine.
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All cats must have stopped the medical treatment for 14 days prior to the initial appointment with us at Willows. Please make sure your cat is starved from 9pm the night before your appointment in case sedation is required. If your cat is being treated with a special diet (Hill’s™ Prescription Diet™ y/d™), he or she will need to have had the diet stopped for 2 weeks prior to this also.

We run the RAI clinics every 3 weeks on a Monday where cats will have a full physical examination, blood work, urinalysis, blood pressure and full consultation to discuss the proposed treatment and pros/cons.

If the patient is suitable for treatment, then the injection will take place that Wednesday. The dose is calculated according to the clinical signs and thyroid levels to ensure it is as accurate as possible. The 131 I treatment is absorbed quickly into the cat’s bloodstream and the diseased thyroid tissue.

Once in the thyroid, it destroys the overactive part of the thyroid gland.

The patient will stay with us for a further 15 days totalling (18 days).

Cats are housed in our luxury radioactive iodine unit and have large cat condo’s to stay in. CCTV is present to provide 24/7 monitoring and twice daily the patients are checked, offered food and their litter tray is changed.
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The patient will stay with us for a further 15 days totalling (18 days). You cannot visit your pet during treatment, nor can pets be removed from the ward until officially released. You cannot terminate the treatment or arrange for early release once therapy has begun. You may leave a small bed or personnel item such as a jumper or t-shirt for comfort but it will not be possible for this to be returned to you, for health and safety reasons.

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**What happens after treatment?**

After being released from treatment, your cat will still possess a very low level of radioactivity, being voided out primarily via urine and faeces. You do not need to totally isolate your cat from people/pets, but you must comply with the following safety precautions until the advised date for your pet is reached.

- You should not hold your cat for prolonged periods of time
- No children or infants in the house should have contact with the cat and should remain a safe distance from the litter tray
- Your cat must be kept inside for 8 days after discharge and he or she must use a litter tray
- You must adhere to storing the waste produced in the litter tray in a secure outside storage area such as a garage or shed for 1 month before it can be put out as general waste. Alternatively flushable cat litter ‘World’s Best Cat Litter’ can be used.
- Your cat must stay out of the bedrooms (especially at night)
- If the cat becomes unwell within the 2 weeks following discharge then Willows should be contacted.

There is a fixed price package which includes the consultation, blood work, urinalysis, blood pressure, the injection and hospitalisation with us. A deposit is required to secure the appointment; this will be refunded if cats are deemed to be unsuitable for treatment, less the cost of the consultation and any further tests.
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Highlands Road Shirley
Solihull West Midlands B90 4NH
Telephone: 0121 712 7070
www.willows.uk.net

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Location
Willows superb small animal hospital is conveniently located in the Midlands just off Junction 4 of the M42. The M42 is readily approached from the M1, M5, M6 and M40.

Exit at Junction 4 of the M42 and head north towards Shirley on the A34. Turn right at the second roundabout on the A34 – signposted ‘Monkspath Business Park’. In 200 yards, turn left at the roundabout – also signposted ‘Monkspath Business Park’.

In a third of a mile turn left at the roundabout onto Highlands Road. The hospital is 200 yards on the right.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding treatment please contact us.

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