Lower Urinary Tract Disease (LUTD)

What is lower urinary disease?
LUTD is an infection or inflammation of the bladder and/or the urethra (the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body). In some instances, LUTD can lead to obstruction of the urethra and/or the formation of stones in the bladder. If your pet has had urinary tract infections or stones, there may be a risk for LUTD. This can cause a great deal of discomfort and can be challenging for you as the pet owner.

What would cause LUTD in my pet and how it is diagnosed?
There are several causes of LUTD, including, bacterial infection, stones, anatomical defects, incontinence and even cancer. If your pet has frequent or difficult urination, painful urination, inappropriate urination, blood in the urine and/or excessive licking of the genital area, LUTD may be present. Your Banfield doctor has several in-house tests that can quickly assist in making the diagnosis. These tests may include a urinalysis, blood chemistry panels and possibly X-rays and ultrasound. Your doctor will use these diagnostic tools paired with a thorough physical exam and information from you, to determine a diagnosis and treatment routine.

What happens if LUTD goes untreated?
Untreated LUTD can potentially progress to a partial or complete blockage of the urethra, allowing little or no urine to be emptied. This is extremely painful for your pet, and if untreated, waste products can build up to toxic levels in your pet’s body in a short amount of time. Blocked pets are an emergency and require immediate medical, and sometimes surgical, intervention.

What can I do to help my pet?
• Increase urination
  ○ Dogs - Increase the number of trips outside. While female dogs typically empty their bladders completely when they urinate, male dogs often only urinate small amounts at a time, keeping a reservoir available for marking territory. It may help with male dogs to take them for a long walk before going to work or bed, allowing them to completely empty their bladders.
  ○ Cats or indoor only dogs - Clean litter box daily to encourage use. Consider adding additional litter boxes.

• Increase your pet’s water intake
  ○ Increasing your pets water intake causes them to urinate more which can help prevent the build up of stones.
  ○ Increase the number of water bowls and refill often.
  ○ Many pets enjoy actively running water, and pet water fountains can be found in PetSmart® and other pet stores for a reasonable price.

For additional information, please contact your Banfield medical team.
Should I feed my pet a different diet?

Royal Canin has developed a special diet strictly to help pets suffering from, or who are at risk for, LUTD–Feline Urinary SO 30™ and Canine Urinary SO 13™. These diets are specifically designed to increase your pet’s water intake and urination, and can even help in the dissolution of some bladder stones. These diets are also enriched with nutrients and prepared with carefully measured levels of calcium, magnesium, phosphorous and potassium to help balance your pet’s urine PH. It is important to feed only this diet to your pet, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. Your Banfield doctor will determine if the Royal Canin urinary diets are best for your pet. At Banfield, we strongly believe in preventive medicine, and we view special diets like the Royal Canin® Veterinary Diet™ Urinary SO as a vital tool to help our pets avoid ailments like LUTD. As always, if you have any questions or concerns about the health of your pet, please contact your Banfield doctor.