

Possible Side Effects Associated with Megestrol-Acetate Use in Felines

NOTE: Potential adverse side effects in cats are more likely to occur at higher doses (>2.5 mg/cat per week for an extended duration).

The most common side effects reported in cats that have received the Low Dose (0.625 mg/kg, typically 2.5 mg, once a week up to 30 weeks) have been increased appetite and weight gain.

Change in eating, drinking, or weight

- Lack of appetite and weight loss
- Increased appetite and weight gain
- Increased thirst
- Dehydration
- Vomiting

Change in urination or defecation

- Increased frequency of urination
- Diarrhea
- Blood in feces
- Abnormal vaginal discharge (pus)

Change in behavior

- Depression
- Lethargy
- Listlessness, docility, or changes in general temperament
- Increased energy or interest in playing or petting
- Excessive grooming of mammary area

Changes to mammary glands

- Hair loss
- Drastic enlargement of one or more mammary glands
- One or more palpable masses (nodules)
- Ulcerated or bleeding skin near the mammary glands
- Strong odor from infected exposed mammary tissue

Other physiological changes

- Fever or low temperature
- Weak pulse
- Shaking
- Abdominal distention
- Painful abdomen
- Palpable uterus

Effects on kittens

- Kittens unable to nurse
- Stillborn or masculinized kittens

Medical Conditions and Associated Symptoms

Prevalence	Medical Condition	Short Description	Symptoms
Associated with lower doses	Hyperphagia	Overeating	Increased appetite and weight gain
		Behavioral changes	Listlessness, docility, and changes in general temperament
	In pregnant females: prolonged gestation	Effects on fetal development	Stillborn or masculinized kittens
	Lactation failure	Inability to lactate	Kittens unable to nurse
Associated with higher doses	Diabetes mellitus (may be reversed when administration stopped)	Diabetes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive thirst • Increased urination • Lethargy • Obesity • Poor or increased appetite • Vomiting
	Pyometra	Pus-filled uterus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethargy • Fever • Dehydration • Poor appetite • Vomiting • Pus (often tinged with blood) draining from the cat's vagina (but fastidious feline groomers often clean it away before it can be observed)
	Adrenal gland suppression (Addison's disease)	Susceptibility to infection. Potassium gradually builds up in the blood and, in severe cases, may cause the heart to slow down or beat irregularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethargy • Lack of appetite (anorexia) • Vomiting • Weight loss • Diarrhea • Shaking • Increased frequency of urination (polyuria) • Increased thirst (polydipsia) • Depression • Dehydration • Weak pulse • Collapse • Low temperature • Blood in feces • Hair loss (alopecia) • Painful abdomen
	Mammary fibroepithelial hyperplasia	Rapid abnormal growth of one or more mammary glands	Drastic enlargement of one or more mammary glands

Prevalence	Medical Condition	Short Description	Symptoms
	Mammary adenocarcinoma	Mammary tumor (benign or malignant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (or more) palpable masses (nodules) underneath the skin of the abdomen They may be next to or within the nipple and follow along the mammary chain. • The size of the mass(es) and their appearance may vary, but they are usually firm and nodular • Occasionally the skin over the mass may ulcerate (open) and bleed, and the affected area may feel warm to the touch and become painful • Cat may tend to lick and groom the area excessively, and a strong odor can result as the exposed tissue becomes infected
	Cystic endometrial hyperplasia	Cysts in lining of uterus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaginal discharge • Anorexia • Lethargy • Abdominal distention • Dehydration • Palpable uterus • Fever