

NATURAL CAT

Flower Power

Treat four common feline behavioral problems with flower essences.

FLOWER ESSENCES, USUALLY MADE by infusing flower petals in pure water, are meant to change negative emotions into positive ones. Before using them, take your cat to the veterinarian to rule out any medical causes for the behavioral problems. For the best results, consult with a holistic veterinarian or practitioner who's experienced in using flower essences on cats.

"Flower essences stimulate the body to heal itself," says Kim Rockshaw, DIHom (Diploma of the Institute of Homeopathy), BFRP (Bach Foundation Registered Practitioner), of San Clemente, Calif. "They promote physical and emotional healing by permanently changing emotional and behavioral patterns. Neither allopathic [traditional] medicine nor herbal treatments can address the reason and cause behind an emotional imbalance, as you can with flower essences. I've been able to greatly reduce the severity of animals' seizures on numerous occasions by placing a few drops of Rescue Remedy, a combination remedy for panic and trauma, on the animal's tongue."



Cats are extremely sensitive to changes in their environment or routine. Even seemingly minor changes, such as rearranging the furniture or working longer hours might distress your cat enough to alter her usual attitude and behavior, for instance, making her more timid or hostile.

Each situation is unique, however. Take a good look at why your cat is acting differently, and try to match her actions to the behavioral descriptions accompanying each flower remedy.

"The more specific you can get in understanding your cat's behavior, the more successful you will be at picking the correct essences," Rockshaw says. "One wonderful quality of flower essences is that they're extremely safe and gentle. Even if you choose the wrong essences, you won't hurt your animal."

Here are four common cat issues and suggested flower essences.

Obsessive-Compulsive Behaviors

Crab Apple is usually recommended to treat obsessive cleanliness, fastidiousness

BY LISA HANKS

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and compulsive behaviors such as excessive grooming. It is also used on pets with rashes.

"Consider Crab Apple for any skin problems like excessive chewing or itchiness," Rockshaw says. "I use White Chestnut for compulsive-obsessive thinking and activity."

Impatiens can help a cat who is excessively nervous, annoyed or impatient, while Vervain soothes and relaxes high-strung, extremely enthusiastic cats who want to be involved in everything.

Aggression Issues

Vine can help excessively authoritative and domineering cats who even want to dominate their owners. Tiger Lily also can help with overaggressive, competitive or hostile cats.

"For animals having trouble getting along with others, always consider Beech and Holly," Rockshaw says. "Beech is used to instill tolerance and flexibility to new situations. Holly is a specific jealousy remedy for animals who display more aggressive tendencies."

For the cat being picked on, Larch can increase self-esteem. For a submissive cat who lets others boss her around, try Centaury. If a cat has been deeply terrorized or panicked, use Rock Rose.

Serious Illness or Trauma

Olive can help with cats who are physically worn out, and Crab Apple's cleansing effect can help flush toxins out of the body and aid healing.

With the shock and trauma of surgery and treatment, a Rescue Remedy-type combination or Quaking Grass and Star of Bethlehem can help.

For a cat mourning the death of another pet or person, there are several options.

"Grief warrants the help of flower essences," Rockshaw says. "The essence of Honeysuckle is most helpful here, along with Walnut and (continued on page 58)

ADMINISTERING RESCUE REMEDY

A standard remedy for extremely stressful situations, terror and shock is Bach's Rescue Remedy, which consists of Star of Bethlehem, Clematis, Cherry Plum, Impatiens and Rock Rose. Several other companies make similar formulas.

To minimize negative reactions before a stressful situation, "dose two or three times (15 minutes apart), starting at least 45 minutes before the event," Rockshaw says.

During an emergency or sudden attack of illness, panic or fear, one dose of Rescue Remedy will often stop the panic immediately, Rockshaw says.



Lisa Hanks is a freelance writer based in Southern California. As she writes each day, her three cats rotate lap duties to be sure she is never catless.