Dermatology

Feline Itch Scale

Pruritus prompts cats to groom excessively and/or scratch using the hind limbs. A healthy cat, free from pruritus, spends about one hour per day grooming (normal grooming behavior) and scratches around one minute per day.

Please read carefully (from the bottom to the top) the behavioral descriptors on the right and left sides and mark on both lines how much your cat licks/scratches, on average, over 24 hours.

How much LICKING?

Nonstop or nearly nonstop licking
My cat over-grooms even during the visit and/or hides constantly. Licking results invariably in hair loss and often includes skin lesions.

Intense and prolonged licking
My cat wakes up and/or stops eating/playing to lick, and/or hides very often. Licking induces hair loss very frequently.

Moderate licking
My cat often hides and wakes up sometimes to groom but never stops eating or playing to do so. Licking often results in hair loss.

Frequent and protracted mild licking
My cat never grooms while eating, sleeping, or playing. It occasionally hides. Licking seldom results in hair loss.

Mild and episodic licking
My cat grooms more than it used to. Licking never results in hair loss.

Healthy cat: licking up to one hour a day

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How much SCRATCHING?

Nonstop or nearly nonstop scratching
My cat scratches even during the visit and/or hides constantly. Scratching results invariably in skin lesions.

Intense and prolonged scratching
My cat wakes up and/or stops eating/playing to scratch, and/or hides very often. Scratching results in skin lesions very frequently.

Moderate scratching
My cat often hides and wakes up sometimes to scratch but never stops eating or playing to do so. Scratching often results in skin lesions.

Frequent and protracted mild scratching
My cat never scratches while eating, sleeping, or playing. It occasionally hides. Scratching seldom results in skin lesions.

Mild and episodic scratching
My cat scratches more than it used to. Scratching never results in skin lesions.

Healthy cat: scratching up to one minute a day

For more information, call
Dermatology at (970) 297-4460.

CSU Veterinary Health System