

How are you today?

We can keep our cats healthy and happy by watching them just like we do other members of the family, and noticing when they are “doing fine” or “not so good”. The list below describes many things you can notice, so when something changes, you won’t miss it. In some cases, the changes that are “not so good” may be due to fear or anxiety, or to disease - sometimes it can be hard to tell. If there has been a sudden change in the cat’s life, the change may be a result of the stress of the change, if not it may be something more serious. If you’re not sure, your veterinarian can help you sort it out.

Things to notice	Doing Fine, Thank You	Not so Good Today
Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as usual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts out of character • Growls, hisses, bites scratches- <i>especially a previously friendly cat</i>
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves around the home normally • Moves smoothly and confidently • Jumps normally • Seeks more affection • Enjoys being petted or handled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless • Gets up and lies down repetitively • Reluctant to move, difficulty getting up from a lying position • Limp, can’t jump as high • Trembles or shakes • Seeks more affection • Avoids being held, picked up, handled or petted • Hides
Daily habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks social interaction • Normal eating, sleeping & drinking • Normal litter box use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdraws from social interaction • Changes in eating, sleeping or drinking • Stops using the litter box • Urinates frequently
Facial expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed face • Normal gaze • Pupils normal for light conditions • Ears erect • Breathes quietly when at rest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grimaces, furrowed brow, vacant stare • Looks glazed, wide-eyed or sleepy • Pupils enlarged • Ears flattened • Pants when at rest
Grooming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal gentle grooming of entire body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn’t groom, or grooms less • Looks unkempt • Licks, bites, or scratches any particular areas of the body.
Posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally lays on side in relaxed position • Carries body normally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lays with feet tucked underneath • Arches back or tucks in abdomen
Vocalizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy meowing • Purring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaintive meowing • Yowling • Hissing • Growling

Adapted from <http://trends.aahanet.org/eweb/images/Trends/PDFs/CatHandout.pdf>