Fishhook Removal for Cats

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Fishhooks

Signs

Fishhooks in the mouth may cause drooling, pawing at the mouth, or trouble swallowing. Fishhooks in the paw will cause your cat to limp.

What You Should Do

To remove a fishhook that has passed all the way through the flesh so the barb is visible, cut the hook with wire cutters and remove the pieces. If the barb is embedded, push the hook through the flesh in the direction the barb is pointed. When the barb is visible, cut the hook and remove it as described. If a hook is embedded deeply, embedded in the mouth or throat, or if it has been swallowed (even with line attached), seek veterinary assistance immediately.

What Your Veterinarian Will Do

Your veterinarian may give your cat an anesthetic to aid in removing a hook that is deeply embedded, in the mouth, or in the throat. If fishing line has been swallowed with a hook, the veterinarian may remove it by endoscopy or surgery.

Aftercare

Most mouth wounds will heal quickly without much further care. Foot wounds should be cleaned and bandaged. If surgery was performed, keep the stitches clean and follow any diet and feeding schedules your veterinarian may want your cat to follow until the wounds are healed.

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