

STUDY REGARDING THE PHYSIOLOGICAL VARIATIONS OF THE DIPSIC BEHAVIOR IN THE GESTATION PERIOD IN DOMESTIC CATS

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It is well known that the physiological status fundamentally influences the intake of nutrients and, implicitly, of water. Since the body's water requirement, under basal conditions, is directly proportional to the body surface and the intensity of metabolic processes, we can correlate gestation, as a metabolically demanding period, with the physiological variations of the requirements of water, which will invariably translate into changes in the dipsic behavior of this species. A group of 8 patients with healthy clinical status was formed, who were evaluated dynamically during the gestation period. The video monitoring of the dipsic behavior was carried out for each patient, in the second part of gestation (after day 35), for a period of 5 consecutive days. Following the corroboration and centralization of the data obtained through video monitoring, ethograms were drawn up for each individual. Regarding the dipsic behavior, the individual ethograms, included data on 4 ethological indicators, namely: the average number of waterings/24 hours, the average duration (in seconds)/watering session, the total time spent by the individual exhibiting dipsic behavior/24 hours, as well as, additionally, the average number of approaches to the water source, without showing dipsic behavior/24 hours. The mean values obtained for the study group were compared statistically (using the classic Student's t-test) with the mean results of a control group of 15 clinically healthy adults, of various ages (2-8 years old). Thus, in the case of pregnant patients, there was observed a statistically significant increase ($p < 0.05$) of the average number of waterings/24 hours, as well as in the average duration of a watering session, compared with the values obtained in the control group. At the same time, a distinctly significant increase ($p < 0.01$) of the average duration of the dipsic behavior manifestation/24 hours was observed, as a result of the simultaneous increase of the other two previously mentioned parameters. As concerning the average number of approaches to the water source, without showing dipsic behavior/24 hours, it was also increased, compared to the results obtained for the control group, but without statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). The increase of the four studied ethological indicators demonstrates that, in this species, pregnant patients show an increased water requirement, translated into an intensification of the dipsic behavior manifestation.

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Keywords: cats, dipsic behavior, ethological indicators, gestation, physiological status.