



Elizabeth Brumback Eilers, DVM



Katy Beachy, DVM

Dr. Elizabeth Brumback Eilers attended UNC-Chapel Hill as an undergraduate before graduating from North Carolina State College of Veterinary Medicine in 1999. She enjoys getting to know her patients and their owners and loves the challenge and fun of feline medicine. She and her husband Pat enjoy being outdoors hiking, cycling and camping, as well as anything on the water. They are happy pet parents to a crazy cat named Chuck Norris and a lovable dog named Tsali.

Dr. Katy Beachy received a B.S. in Biology at Ohio State University, then continued on to graduate from The OSU College of Veterinary Medicine in 2000. In her free time she enjoys spending quality time with her beautiful children (Lexi, Logan, and Lukas) baking, hiking, watching movies, doing art projects, etc. They share their home with five crazy cats: Biscuit, Rosie, Harley, BatCat, and Minion. You can follow her on Instagram at catvetkb to find funny pictures and adoptable kittens.

"MY CAT ATE WHAT?!?!?"

As a cat owner and lover have you ever talked to your dog-owning friends about the things their pets have eaten and thought to yourself: "Thank goodness that's not me!?" There is no emergency foreign body surgery to remove chewed up underwear, a whole roll of duct tape, sea shells, Kongs or any number of other possible non-consumables that we have seen and heard of dogs eating...because cats don't do that, right? Wrong! They do - and sometimes they eat things that boggle the mind. "How in the world did they swallow THAT?!?!" One cat had such a penchant for curling ribbon that he

had to go to surgery not once, but twice, to remove eight to ten feet of curling ribbon from his stomach. A child's balloon left unattended became the source for the second ingestion.

Truth is, cats are notorious for eating things that have no business in their GI tracts - from the above mentioned ribbon, to shoe laces, rope, dental floss, sewing thread (with needles on the other end!), a child's pretty necklace of fishing line strung with colorful beads, knee high panty hose, hair bands and pony tail holders and the dreaded tinsel and Easter grass are all examples of things that can lead to problems for the overly curious cat. Even a cat's own fur can lodge in the intestines and cause a foreign body obstruction.

Unfortunately, cat toys themselves can pose a threat to cats too. The strings from feather toys, stuffing out of catnip toys, and plastic spiky balls (as pictured below) can be ingested and lead to serious complications if not removed.

The best way to protect our furry friends from themselves is to use string-related toys in a supervised setting only, putting them out of reach when you are done playing. Yarn and other string-like objects should never be left lying around. Not all cats seem to have the desire to eat strange objects, so knowing the personality of your own cat can help you determine what needs to be put away to keep them safe.

If you suspect your cat has eaten something, the sooner he is seen by a veterinarian the better. Sometimes the objects can pass safely through in the cat's stool (the picture of the needle and thread below is one crazy example that is still scary to think about!) Sometimes the objects can be removed endoscopically, but other times, if the cat does not pass the item on its own, or begins vomiting, showing signs of pain or lethargy, exploratory surgery is required.

If you see ribbon or another string-like object dangling from your cat's hind end, do not pull it! Doing so can be extremely dangerous. You can cut the string shorter and bring him to the vet. Also, if you catch your cat in the process of swallowing something, care must be taken in removing it, as some things such as ribbon can act like a knife and cause serious damage.

Here is a list of other strange objects that we have removed from cats' GI tracts: coins, a plastic chair skid, a nice big tube of fish flavored aluminum foil three days after a client had a fish fry, an entire bag of pony tail holders, pieces of tape, a tiny plastic dinosaur toy, a baby bottle nipple, a foam ear plug, five elastic hair bands, and many items that just could not be identified.

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Pictured below: the spiky plastic ball in the stomach (1) and after removal (2) (along with a lot of hair), a shoe lace (3), a sewing needle (4 & 5) (swallowed 3 days before he came to see us, and passed safely in his stool, thank goodness).

