



Feline Findings | CATalyst Council | October 30, 2025

## **Behavioral and bonding trends: Everyday behavior as early health signals**

Volume II of the CATalyst Council 2025 Feline Market Insights Report highlights a powerful relationship between cats and their caregivers:

- approximately **93 percent of owners** view their cat as a family member, and
- **77 percent of Gen Z owners** stated they would spend any amount to keep their cat healthy.<sup>(1)</sup>

This emotional commitment of cat owners supports continued investment in species-specific care to drive feline veterinary visits.

Everyday feline behavior offers some of the earliest indicators of health status, often appearing before overt clinical signs. Small changes in activity, appetite, and the litter box routine are especially informative. Educating your clients about these subtle shifts helps the cat, strengthens the bond, and improves clinical outcomes.

### **Make Behavior a Vital Sign**

Encourage caregivers to observe and track daily behaviors which include:

- activity
- appetite
- drinking
- elimination
- grooming
- play
- social interaction

Ask them to note even small changes in frequency, intensity, or timing to establish their cat's specific trends.

### **Establish Each Cat's Baseline at Home**

Provide a simple tracker that captures daily patterns. For example, use short notes, photos, and timestamps. Smart litter boxes, activity trackers, AI-driven behavior tools, and connected feeders can all help capture daily patterns. However, **consistency and trends** are what matter most. A weekly two-minute review builds awareness.

### **Bridge Home Observations to the Exam Room**

Invite caregivers to share "what is normal" for their cat and the top one or two changes since the last visit. Add these to the medical record and set clear thresholds for when to call.

Examples may include: reduced appetite for 24 hours, new litter box straining, increased nighttime activity, or vocalizing.

### **Play With Your Cat**

Interactive play is both enrichment and data. Two to three short daily sessions that follow the prey sequence (stalk, chase, pounce, catch) help regulate stress, appetite, and sleep, and support healthy weight. End with a small treat to complete the hunt-eat-rest cycle. Watch for changes in play engagement, such as hesitating to jump, stopping mid-chase, and stiffness on landing. These subtle shifts often surface before overt clinical signs and should be noted in the tracker and shared at visits.

Behavior is data <sup>(2)</sup>, and as the human-feline bond grows and caregivers become more attuned to cats' emotional well-being, there is a significant opportunity to elevate awareness at home and record everyday behavior as a vital sign, moving care earlier and making it more effective. Having clients bring this information and insight to each visit gives the veterinary team a true baseline, helps them spot meaningful change, focuses exams and diagnostics, sets clear thresholds for follow-up, and aligns rechecks and home plans with what the cat shows day to day. Additionally, strong collaboration between veterinary teams and caregivers creates loyal clientele.

Learn more about CATalyst Council at <https://catalystcouncil.org/>.

(1)<https://catalystcouncil.org/catalyst-council-feline-market-insights-report-vol-ii-reveals-emotional-and-operational-barriers-to-20-billion-feline-opportunity/>

(2)<https://catalystcouncil.org/catalyst-council-releases-feline-market-insights-volume-iii-continued-market-outperformance-by-cats/>