Possible Side Effects Associated with Megestrol-Acetate Use in Felines

**NOTE:** Potential adverse side effects in cats are more likely to occur at higher doses (>2.5 mg/cat per week for an extended duration).

The most common side effects reported in cats that have received the Low Dose (0.625 mg/kg, typically 2.5 mg, once a week up to 30 weeks) have been increased appetite and weight gain.

**Change in eating, drinking, or weight**
- Lack of appetite and weight loss
- Increased appetite and weight gain
- Increased thirst
- Dehydration
- Vomiting

**Change in urination or defecation**
- Increased frequency of urination
- Diarrhea
- Blood in feces
- Abnormal vaginal discharge (pus)

**Change in behavior**
- Depression
- Lethargy
- Listlessness, docility, or changes in general temperament
- Increased energy or interest in playing or petting
- Excessive grooming of mammary area

**Changes to mammary glands**
- Hair loss
- Drastic enlargement of one or more mammary glands
- One or more palpable masses (nodules)
- Ulcerated or bleeding skin near the mammary glands
- Strong odor from infected exposed mammary tissue

**Other physiological changes**
- Fever or low temperature
- Weak pulse
- Shaking
- Abdominal distention
- Painful abdomen
- Palpable uterus

**Effects on kittens**
- Kittens unable to nurse
- Stillborn or masculinized kittens
## Medical Conditions and Associated Symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence</th>
<th>Medical Condition</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
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<tr>
<td>Associated with lower doses</td>
<td>Hyperphagia</td>
<td>Overeating</td>
<td>Increased appetite and weight gain</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Behavioral changes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Listlessness, docility, and changes in general temperament</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In pregnant females: prolonged gestation</td>
<td>Effects on fetal development</td>
<td>Stillborn or masculinized kittens</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lactation failure</td>
<td>Inability to lactate</td>
<td>Kittens unable to nurse</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diabetes mellitus (may be reversed when administration stopped)</td>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>• Excessive thirst&lt;br&gt;• Increased urination&lt;br&gt;• Lethargy&lt;br&gt;• Obesity&lt;br&gt;• Poor or increased appetite&lt;br&gt;• Vomiting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pyometra</td>
<td>Pus-filled uterus</td>
<td>• Lethargy&lt;br&gt;• Fever&lt;br&gt;• Dehydration&lt;br&gt;• Poor appetite&lt;br&gt;• Vomiting&lt;br&gt;• Pus (often tinged with blood) draining from the cat’s vagina (but fastidious feline groomers often clean it away before it can be observed)</td>
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<td>Adrenal gland suppression (Addison’s disease)</td>
<td>Susceptibility to infection. Potassium gradually builds up in the blood and, in severe cases, may cause the heart to slow down or beat irregularly.</td>
<td>• Lethargy&lt;br&gt;• Lack of appetite (anorexia)&lt;br&gt;• Vomiting&lt;br&gt;• Weight loss&lt;br&gt;• Diarrhea&lt;br&gt;• Shaking&lt;br&gt;• Increased frequency of urination (polyuria)&lt;br&gt;• Increased thirst (polydipsia)&lt;br&gt;• Depression&lt;br&gt;• Dehydration&lt;br&gt;• Weak pulse&lt;br&gt;• Collapse&lt;br&gt;• Low temperature&lt;br&gt;• Blood in feces&lt;br&gt;• Hair loss (alopecia)&lt;br&gt;• Painful abdomen</td>
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<td>Mammary fibroepithelial hyperplasia</td>
<td>Rapid abnormal growth of one or more mammary glands</td>
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|            | Mammary adenocarcinoma | Mammary tumor (benign or malignant) | - One (or more) palpable masses (nodules) underneath the skin of the abdomen. They may be next to or within the nipple and follow along the mammary chain.  
- The size of the mass(es) and their appearance may vary, but they are usually firm and nodular.  
- Occasionally the skin over the mass may ulcerate (open) and bleed, and the affected area may feel warm to the touch and become painful.  
- Cat may tend to lick and groom the area excessively, and a strong odor can result as the exposed tissue becomes infected. |
|            | Cystic endometrial hyperplasia | Cysts in lining of uterus | - Vaginal discharge  
- Anorexia  
- Lethargy  
- Abdominal distention  
- Dehydration  
- Palpable uterus  
- Fever |