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## Foster Cat Journal: Update, Headache & Gratitude

Wed, 2011-02-23 12:26 — Robin Olson

**Thank you to SO MANY of you who took the time to e-mail, post comments here or on our [CiCH FB page](#) <sup>[1]</sup> about what to do to help Cara get better.**

In a way, I wish I didn't have such smart folks reading my Blog. A few of you wrote to me about PRAA and asked me if Cara might have that? PRAA is [Persistent Right Aortic Arch](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. Yes, it's as bad as it sounds.

This is a description of PRAA from *Bob Sherding* of the *Veterinary Information Network*. You can read the entire article [HERE](#) <sup>[3]</sup>.

*"Vascular ring anomalies are congenital malformations of the great vessels and their branches that entrap the intrathoracic esophagus and cause clinical signs of esophageal obstruction. Persistent right aortic arch (PRAA) accounts for 95% of vascular ring malformations and occurs when the embryonic right rather than the left fourth aortic arch becomes the functional adult aorta. The ligamentum arteriosum continues to develop from the left side, thus forming a band that crosses over the esophagus to connect the main pulmonary artery and the anomalous aorta. Esophageal compression occurs by the aorta on the right, the ligamentum dorsolaterally on the left, the pulmonary trunk on the left, and the base of the heart ventrally.*

*Affected cats are usually presented as kittens for regurgitation of solid food that began at the time of weaning. Most cats are presented before six months of age. Regurgitation of undigested food usually occurs immediately after eating but is sometimes delayed as ingesta is retained in a large esophageal pouch that develops cranial to the obstruction. Liquids and semisolid food are preferentially retained. On physical examination, most cats are underweight.*

*The dilated esophagus appears as a food or fluid-filled density cranial to the base of the heart. On the ventrodorsal view, the normal bulge of the aortic arch to the left is absent. A barium esophagram can confirm the location of esophageal obstruction and the severity of secondary esophageal distention. Endoscopy shows extraluminal compression by the ligamentum.*

*Definitive therapy for PRAA is surgical ligation and transection of the ligamentum arteriosum. Clinical improvement is usually noted after surgery; however, mild esophageal distention may persist, especially if a large pouch was present prior to surgery. Recovery of normal esophageal function is best when the surgery is performed at an early age."*



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Cara. What is wrong with you little one?

This sounds a lot like what Cara is experiencing. I'm going to give Dr. Larry a call to make sure he's ruled this out as a possible cause of Cara's inability to keep food down. We're also getting Cara's blood test results back today. Might show us something.

Speaking of Cara, **she has NOT vomited since the dry food debacle yesterday afternoon now that I'm feeding her ONLY chicken baby food.** She seems perky and lively and **HUNGRY**. I'm monitoring her calorie intake to make sure she gets enough to eat. In a few days I'll begin to mix in a better balanced grain-free canned food into the baby food to see if she can manage it. If she can't keep it down, I'm going to be doubly suspicious that she has PRAA.

And, of course, Polly is sneezing again-rapid fire. I really hoped this new round of meds would get her better, but it seems to have failed. Chester is doing well, but has a runny eye. He's a very big boy! I really need to get him ready to be adopted!

Me, I've just got a headache.

**CICH Content Categories:**

[Blood Tests](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

[Dr. Larry](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

[Foster Cat Journal](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

[Grain Free](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

[Kitten](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

[WTF?!](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

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[2] <http://praakitten.homestead.com/PRAAinAnimals.html>

[3] <http://www.vin.com/proceedings/Proceedings.plx?CID=WSAVA2001&Category=264&PID=115&Print=1&O=Generic>

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