**Q. Our cat has started urinating inside the house by the cat flap, back door and oddly also around our bathroom window, he has not done this before and is usually clean in the house what would cause him to start this problem?**

A. I realise this may be something quite different for you, but this tends to be a more common behavioural problem in cats. There are many reasons that can trigger inappropriate urination. Given that he is clean in other areas of the home I am assuming he is young fit and well, and there is no medical problem to consider. It is not clear from your question if he is marking or eliminating so this needs to be established first. Assess how much urine is being released to identify what his intentions are! With either behaviour, there should be an assessment of his emotional state and whether you may have noticed other changes so keep an eye on him and see what he is up to at other times. It is highly likely that he perceives a threat in his environment from either outside or inside the house. Do you own any other cats or have neighbouring cats, is there a new cat in town? Have you moved recently or lost other cats he was bonded with? Most elimination problems involve cats that are fearful or feel ‘insecure’, often there is tension between cats that live together or between those that are ‘forced’ to share small territories. The areas he is toileting are entry and exit points, have you noticed any cats ‘camping out’ around these? Is he being ambushed or stopped from going outdoors by another cat (or pet)? If so, he may be too nervous to try to venture outdoors and so ends up soiling indoors. What you should also consider at this point, is your relationship with your cat, do you tell him off for this inappropriate behaviour? If you do, then stop as this is likely to make him more nervous and may add to the problem. Is your house calm or very busy and loud? Social disturbances can wreak havoc with a cat’s emotional state, so be warned. You can make a start to help resolve this problem while you assess his environment and behaviour further. Make sure you clean up with appropriate products that remove the urine odour, like OdorKill or PetPower. Provide him with a litter tray, deep filled with a mineral based product and put this near to where he is soiling. Make sure this is a quiet and more secluded location. He needs to be encouraged to use this but if you have other cats, they will need at least one litter tray each and these will need to be placed well away from each other. When thoroughly cleaned, place large plastic sheets covered with tin foil over his urination sites and put food bowls down on them. Some cats don’t like tin foil and most don’t like urinating near their food! Until the triggers are found these suggestions will only serve to delay the resolution, so over to you and more investigations!

**Q. My dad has said cat bites can cause more illness in people then dog bites, is this true?**

A. Well yes, your dad is right. About a quarter of dog bites contain a bacterium called Pasteurella multocida compared to around 50 to 75% of cat bites. These bacteria are zoonotic, meaning they can be passed from animals to human, and while it is normal for these bacteria to be present in both dog and cat skin, oral and digestive cavities they can cause infection and disease under certain conditions. So you can see there is a higher chance of becoming ill if a cat should bite you. There are other bacteria found in both dog and cat bites such as Staphylococcus aureus, but the higher risk of infection from cats is likely due to the type of bite rather than the type of bacteria. Cats tend to deliver a narrow but deeper bite than dogs, so introduce bacteria deeper into the wound. So well done dad!

**Q. My cat twitches her tail and flattens her ears when she sees my boyfriend. Her eyes look darker and she becomes rock like. Although my boyfriend talks to her gently this doesn’t seem to help. Is she frightened of him?**

A. Most cats that are frightened tend to run away, if your cat doesn’t but has opportunity to do so, I am guessing she doesn’t like your choice of boyfriend! From your description she is frozen in a self-defensive crouch and in mid flow of warning your boyfriend of her intention to attack. She will need correct handling and ongoing support for her to overcome this reaction.