Chapter 03 - Find the problem fast

Use observable signs rather than guessing a diagnosis. The cat application supports reference searches, not diagnosis.

Describe what is happening

Record the visible problem: abnormal breathing, collapse, bleeding, difficulty walking, vomiting, injury, exposure, seizures, or repeated litter-box visits without producing urine.

Recognize breathing emergencies

A cat with open-mouth breathing, severe effort to breathe, blue or pale gums, or collapse needs urgent veterinary attention. Do not force the cat into a stressful examination.

Recognize suspected choking or cardiac arrest

If the cat appears to choke, move to Chapter 7 and contact emergency care. If unresponsive and not breathing normally, use Chapters 4–6. Avoid delays caused by searching or photographing.

Use the cat application

Tap the red Start Assistance button or enter symptoms in the field. The cat-only reference can help locate a relevant topic. For severe symptoms, call the veterinary team first and use the reference only if it will not delay care.

Describe body location

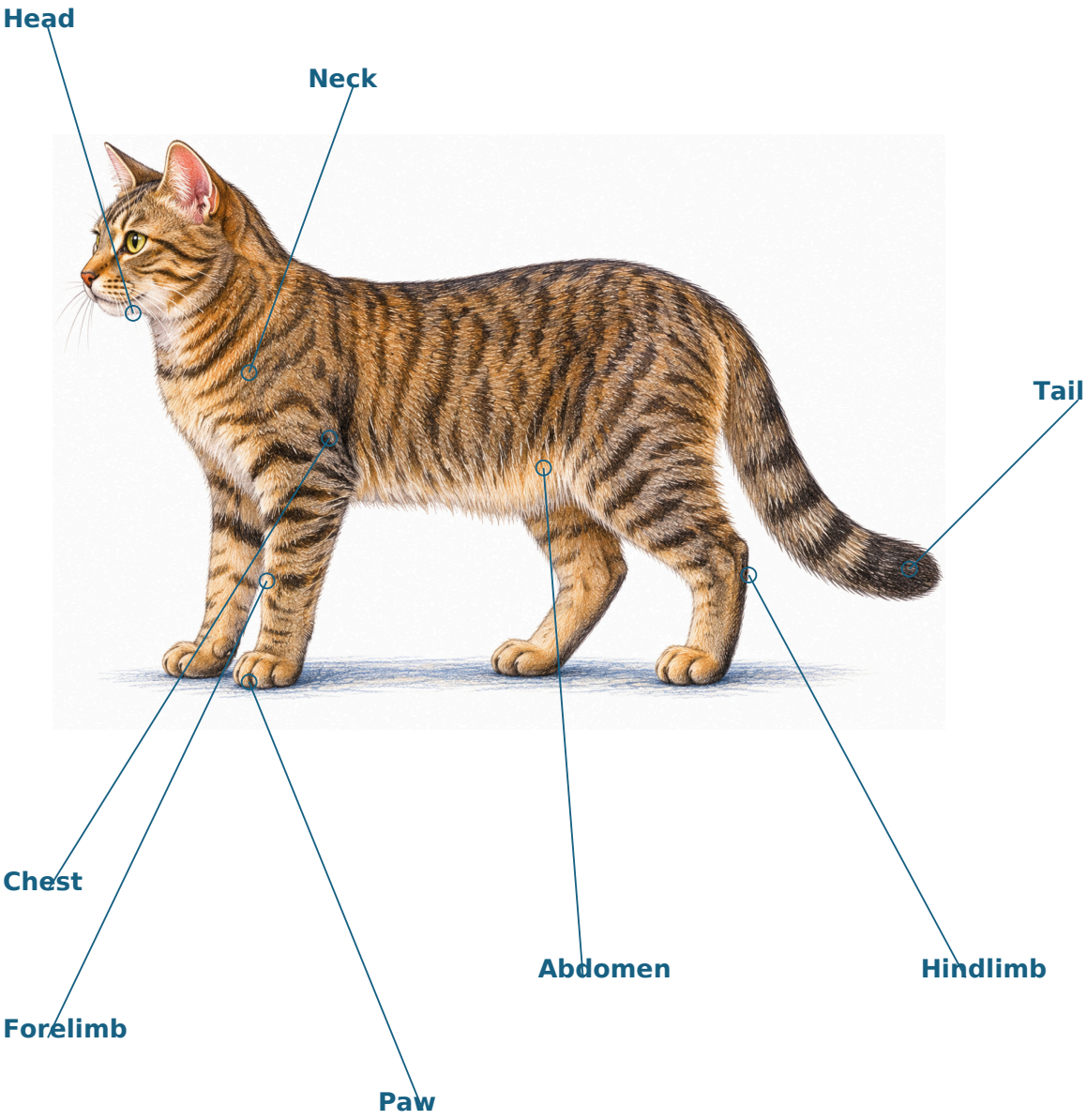
Identify the cat’s own left or right side, head, mouth, neck, chest, abdomen, front or hind limb, paw, pad, or claw. Do not infer an internal injury from an image.



External observation only: identify the head, neck, chest, abdomen, forelimb, hindlimb, paw or tail. Do not diagnose from appearance.

Describe where you see the problem

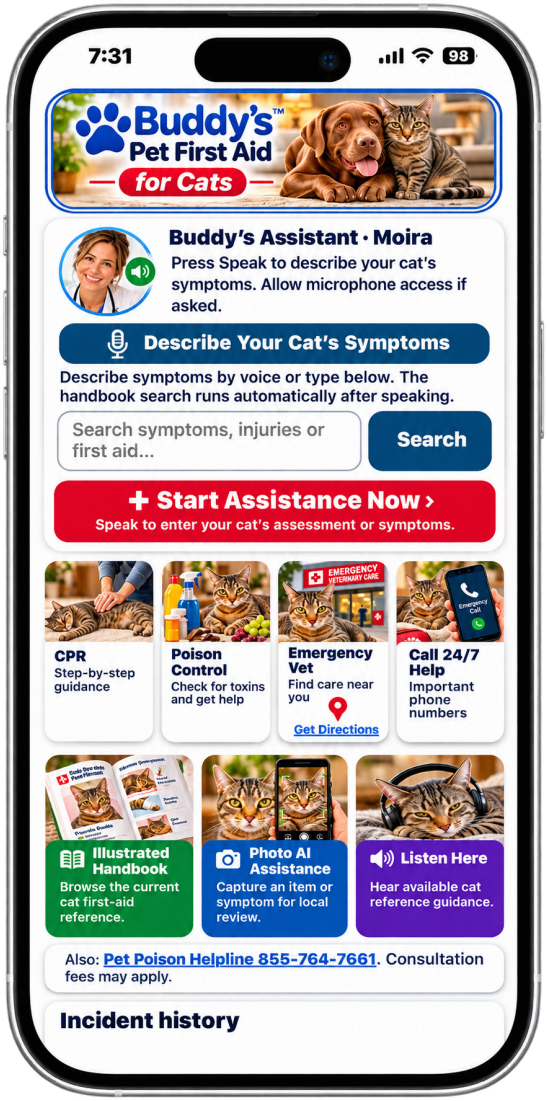
Use the cat’s own left or right side and name the visible body region. Observe without pressing a painful area or moving an injured limb.



Describe observations, not a diagnosis

Tell the clinic what changed, when it began, and whether breathing, walking or litter-box use is affected.

Cat app - symptom assistance



Use the approved cat app interface. The reference supports symptom recording and veterinary contact; it does not establish a diagnosis.