



## *The Cat's Meow*

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### *Notes on Brian*

*Age:* 35

*Presentation:* Brian presents complaining of cough, chest tightness and wheezing

- ✓ Brian's symptoms are worse at night, in the morning, with cold air exposure, laughter and exercise
- ✓ Some nasal congestion and eye irritation are also present
- ✓ He has just moved in with his fiancée, who has two cats
- ✓ He improved while away from the cats on a two-week business trip
- ✓ He is otherwise healthy

### *Brian's history:*

- ✓ No prior history of allergies or asthma

### *Current medications:*

- ✓ No medications

### *Physical exam:*

- ✓ The physical exam reveals slightly edematous, pale nasal mucosa
- ✓ His chest is clear at the time of examination
- ✓ The rest of the exam is unremarkable

*What do you suspect?*


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### *Final diagnosis:*

#### *Cat allergy with asthma and rhinoconjunctivitis*

- ✓ An allergy skin prick test confirms positive skin test to cat
- ✓ The spirometry is normal, but positive methacholine challenge confirms diagnosis of asthma with moderate airway hyper-reactivity

### *Management:*

- ✓ Removal of the cats from the home environment is strongly advised
- ✓ Brian is started on a combination of inhaled corticosteroids and a long-acting beta agonist
- ✓ Intranasal corticosteroids are used for nasal symptoms
- ✓ Nonsedating antihistamines may be useful as an adjunctive treatment
- ✓ Leukotriene receptor antagonist may be useful as an adjunctive treatment
- ✓ Omalizumab (monoclonal anti-IgE antibody) may be an option
- ✓ Allergen injection immunotherapy (traditional “allergy shots”) is less desirable than allergen avoidance 

### *Upcoming cases*

- ✓ **November:** Common variable immunodeficiency
- ✓ **December:** Contact dermatitis
- ✓ **January:** Mastocytosis

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