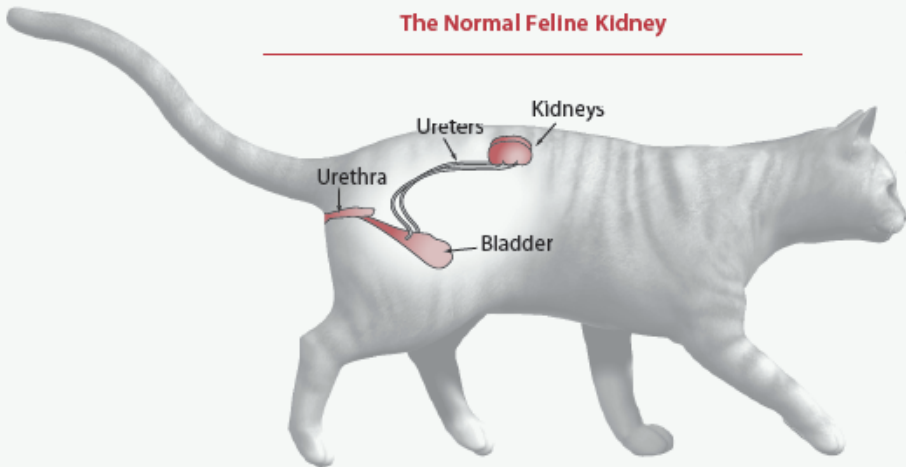


HOW THE KIDNEYS FUNCTION

A cat's kidneys play a vital role in many bodily functions. They help control blood pressure, regulate the bloodstream and produce a variety of hormones and enzymes. They serve as filters for the body by removing waste substances and toxins from the blood.

The Normal Feline Kidney



Each kidney contains hundreds of thousands of tiny filtration units called nephrons. Blood enters the kidneys through the renal artery and then moves through progressively smaller vessels until it reaches the nephrons, which then filter the blood through microscopic structures called glomeruli. The filtered blood then circulates back to the heart, and the waste removed by the kidneys is eliminated as urine from the kidneys to the bladder to be eventually excreted.