



The Facts about Feline AIDS

What is Feline AIDS?

Feline AIDS is caused by infection with feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). FIV causes a potentially fatal viral disease that interferes with the immune system of a cat.

The virus lives in the blood of the infected cat and is carried in its system throughout its life.

Healthy cats contract the infection through being bitten by an FIV positive cat.

Cats infected with FIV may remain healthy for a number of years. While some infected cats show no sign of the disease, others may display initial symptoms such as;

- Fever
- Loss of Appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Lethargy
- Swollen Lymph Nodes

As the disease progresses, symptoms may occur such as;

- Weight Loss
- Sores in and around the mouth
- Eye Lesions
- Poor Coat
- Chronic Infections

Eventually the immune system becomes too weak to fight off other infections or diseases. As a result, the cat will die from one of these subsequent infections.

How is the Infection contracted?

FIV is spread from cat to cat primarily through bite wounds, the virus being shed in high levels through saliva. Outdoor cats are at higher risk for contracting the disease. The spread of FIV through watering bowls or

grooming is unlikely. An actual bite wound is an integral part of the disease transmission. Although rare, it is possible for a mother to pass the infection on to her unborn foetus.

How prevalent is FIV in Australia?

It is reported that between 14% and 29% of cats in Australia test positive to the disease. Outdoor cats are at the highest risk of disease.

What can I do to prevent feline AIDS?

There is no treatment or cure for an FIV infected cat. However a vaccine is available that can aid in the prevention of infection with FIV.

Talk to your veterinarian about the best vaccination program for your cat.

Along with vaccination, other health management measures include;

- Limiting Exposure of indoor cats to outdoor cats.
- Using caution when introducing a new cat to a multi-cat household.
- Having a new cat tested prior to joining the household
- Isolating an aggressive cat from other cats.

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FIV Vaccination guideline

Unvaccinated Cats

Those cats presented at 8 weeks of age or older require 3 doses at an intervaccination interval of 2-4 weeks.

Vaccinated Cats

Annual Vaccination Recommended

It is recommended you seek the advice of your veterinarian who will prescribe the most appropriate vaccination for your pet.

This information has been made available to pet owners from Boehringer Ingelheim for **Felo-O-Vax FIV**, reproduced by Townsville Vet Clinic.