



Answers to Client FAQs

Frequently
Asked
Questions

■ What is FIV?

FIV stands for feline immunodeficiency virus. FIV is a fatal, viral disease that interferes with the immune system of the cat. The virus lives in the blood of the infected cat and is carried throughout the life of the cat.

■ How do cats get FIV?

FIV is spread from cat to cat primarily through bite wounds as the virus is shed in high levels through saliva. Cats with exposure to other cats are at risk for FIV. Although rare, it is possible for a mother to pass the infection to her unborn fetus.

■ Can humans get FIV?

Even though this feline virus is related to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), no human has ever been reported to be infected with FIV.

■ How prevalent is FIV?

Up to 1 in 12 cats in the United States test positive for this disease. Infection rates in at risk cats may be even higher.

■ How do I know if my cat is infected with FIV?

Diagnosis of FIV requires a history of recurring or persistent infections and positive antibody detection by an in-hospital-screening test. The presence of FIV antibodies prior to vaccination indicates that the cat is infected with the virus.

■ How do I prevent FIV?

Vaccination is the best way to prevent the infection. There is no cure or treatment for an FIV infected cat. Along with vaccination, other health management measures include...

1. limiting the exposure of indoor cats to outdoor cats,
2. using caution when introducing a new cat to a multi-cat household,
3. having new cats tested prior to joining the household and isolating an aggressive cat from other cats.

■ Is a booster required?

Two boosters, two to three weeks apart are required after the initial dose is given. An annual booster is also recommended.

■ How much will this cost me?

The price of this vaccine is in line with the other vaccines your cat receives. This is a bargain when you consider the medical cost of treating an FIV positive cat over the course of its lifetime.

■ My cat is an indoor cat, does he/she need this vaccine.<Pull out the FIV At-Risk Checklist>

Chances of indoor cats becoming infected with FIV are rare.

Let's review this FIV At-Risk Checklist to see if your cat is at risk.