

FELINE AIDS (FIV)

A new feline virus has been discovered that is very similar to the Human AIDS virus.

Some current information regarding FIV:

- There is no evidence to indicate that the disease is transmittable to humans. Cat owners should not be concerned that their cats could expose them to human AIDS.
- The disease is predominantly seen in older cats (unlike the leukemia virus) and blood samples from all over the U.S. have tested positive. The disease is “nationwide.”
- Although similar to Feline Leukemia Virus, cats infected with FIV do not test positive for leukemia. There is a specific test available to screen for FIV. It is reliable and requires only a small amount of blood.
- Signs of the disease are similar to those in humans suffering from AIDS and include swollen lymph nodes, severe weight loss, diarrhea, respiratory infections, anemia, and parasitic infections. The virus suppresses the cat’s entire immune system.
- Because **FIV** in cats attacks the same type of blood cells that the human AIDS virus destroys in humans, it is felt that the cat may help provide answers for AIDS research.
- FIV infection should be suspected in any cat that has repeated infections or continually gets in fights with other cats.



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