



What is it?

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus or FIV is a “slow virus” similar to HIV that eventually leads to a state of immune deficiency that hinders a cat’s ability to protect itself against other infections.

How do cats get it?

FIV is transferred only by saliva to blood or blood to blood contact.

Known as the “fighting disease”, sharing a litter box or food bowl, minor scuffles or grooming each other, does not pass FIV from one cat to another. For infection to occur there needs to be a significant puncture wound or multiple wounds. This type of fighting is rare among socialized spay/neutered cats living in a stable home. On rare occasion it can pass from mother cat to kittens.

Is it contagious to humans?

No. It is not contagious to humans or other species.

What is the prevalence of FIV?

About 1.5-3% of all indoor and outdoor cats are infected with FIV. Many people have an FIV+ cat and are unaware for years until other secondary infections surface.

Is it difficult to care for an FIV+ cat?

The best way to keep your FIV+ cat healthy is by providing regular veterinary wellness visits, feeding them high quality food, seeking medical care if symptoms of infection or illness occur, and giving them lots of love. Additionally, we encourage you to provide these felines with an indoor-only lifestyle, to prevent the risk of exposing other cats in your community to FIV, and also to protect your new pet from exposure to other diseases.

If I adopt an FIV cat will he/she die soon?

Many FIV+ cats live long healthy lives. Many live into their teens before there is any indication of an immune system compromise. The average lifespan of an FIV cat is five years after the time of diagnosis.

Why should I adopt an FIV cat?

All cats deserve a chance to live full, happy lives and thrive on the companionship that comes from a loving home. Because FIV does not necessarily mean a short and illness-filled life, these cat would benefit from a home environment just like any other cat.

And you will benefit from the love of a grateful cat or two!