

Facts about FeLV

1 What is FeLV?



Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) is a common infectious disease in cats.

FeLV is contagious only to other cats.

It is not contagious to dogs, humans, or other non-feline species.

The virus is not transmitted by air, and it dies rapidly in the environment.

FeLV is spread primarily between mother to kitten, and through infected saliva and urine.

It can be transmitted through a bite wound, during grooming, sharing water and food bowls, or contaminated litter boxes. The best situation for a FeLV-infected kitty is to live in a calm, clean, indoor environment and only be around other FeLV+ kitties, since the virus spreads easily between cats.

2 Testing and Diagnosis



ELISA enzyme-linked testing is performed first as an initial screening for the virus, to detect the protein component of FeLV.

If the ELISA test is positive, **FeLV Quant RealPCR™** testing is performed to confirm the status.

This advanced PCR test detects the stage of the viral load, and can tell if it is progressive or regressive. Your veterinarian may recommend other testing for individual cases.

Almost Home Cat Rescue always performs the first-level ELISA testing and the second-level qPCR test if the first is positive. There are effective vaccines to protect uninfected kitties from acquiring FeLV.

Almost Home Cat Rescue inoculates all our kittens that include the FeLV vaccine.

3 Signs of Illness



Kitties that are FeLV+ may not be sick for months or years, showing no symptoms. They can infect other cats however, which is why it is recommended to always keep FeLV+ kitties separate from non-infected cats. If the infection becomes active in their body, they may develop problems such as low red blood cells (anemia) or cancer. These problems can be severe and even fatal, but the signs and symptoms of FeLV vary greatly depending on the infected cells. Some cats show mild symptoms, but many cats don't have any noticeable symptoms. If you see any of the below conditions, see your vet:

- Poor appetite
- Enlarged lymph nodes
- Persistent fever
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Pale gums
- Lethargy
- Weakened immune system
- Skin, bladder, and respiratory infections

4 Living with FeLV



Kitties with FeLV may have a shorter life expectancy than FeLV negative cats, but does it not stop them from living normal, happy, healthy lives. While there are no treatments for the virus that will get rid of the infection, maintaining a clean house to protect them from secondary infections will help them live with the virus. This is important to help them defend against daily contact with environmental bacteria, fungi, viruses, and protozoa.

Offering a nutritionally balanced high-quality diet is also essential for FeLV+ cats.

Kitties should visit their veterinarian for regular check-ups. Monitor weight, appetite, activity level, elimination habits, appearance of the mouth and eyes, and behavior to help manage the virus.

Your veterinarian will advise on blood testing, vaccinations, parasite prevention, and nutritional supplements such as FELIMM which naturally encourage the detoxification of the lymphatic system, strengthen the immune system, and improve energy levels.

It is important to realize that cats with FeLV can live normal lives for prolonged periods of time.

Our kitties appreciate you giving them a chance for love and happiness in their forever home!