

Feline Leukemia Virus

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Overview

Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is a retroviral disease that impairs immune system function and causes anemia and some types of cancer. FeLV is transmitted by prolonged close contact with an infected cat. Kittens can be born with FeLV or acquire the virus through their mother's milk.

The average age of infection is 3 years and male cats may have a higher prevalence of infection than female cats.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Feline leukemia is diagnosed through blood tests including an ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) or IFA (indirect immunofluorescence) test.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. There is no specific treatment for feline leukemia. Antibiotics are used to treat infections. Tumors are often biopsied and surgery may be needed. Chemotherapy may be used to treat cancer. Blood transfusion may be needed for severe anemia. Nutritional support is important in maintaining health. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Chronic infections
- Anemia
- Weight loss
- Difficulty breathing
- Eye problems
- Lethargy
- Poor wound healing

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*

