

Aireworth Vets   
SMALL ANIMAL

## FeLV/FIV



If you have any further queries regarding the welfare of your pet, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff

We are happy to assist!

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## What is FeLV & FIV?

FeLV is Feline Leukaemia Virus, a retrovirus that may cause severe immune suppression, anaemia and result in increased risk of other infections. FIV is Feline Immunodeficiency Virus, also known as Feline Aids, it is a retrovirus that may result in severe immune suppression in cats. FIV can attack the immune system of cats, much like the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) can attack the immune system of human beings.

## What are the first signs of these diseases?

Some infected cats will show no symptoms. However, those that do often show:

- Poor coat.
- Lack of appetite.
- Weight loss.
- Fever.
- Abnormal breathing, persistent cough.
- Sore mouth and gums.
- Wounds not healing, persistent abscesses.
- Recurrent diarrhoea .

Any of these signs should prompt you to see you vet for an examination and if necessary a blood test.



## Is my cat at risk of being infected?

FeLV & FIV are two viruses that can be found everywhere, in both urban and rural areas. They are highly contagious and are transmitted by both sick and apparently healthy cats. Any cat that comes into contact with other cats ( when playing, fighting or simply another cat in the same household) runs a greater risk of becoming infected or of already being infected.

## When should I test my cat?

The blood test is the only way of knowing if your cat is infected. It can be performed by a nurse and only requires a small sample of blood.

It doesn't take long and you will receive the results within 24hrs.



## What would a positive test result mean?

If your cat shows no symptoms and is confirmed as positive to one or more of these tests it is important to remember:

- That in some cases it is possible that the infection is transient and that the cat will eliminate the virus itself.
- Occasionally false positives occur, so all positives need confirming with a second test.
- That your cat may be a potential source of infection for other cats. In this case your vet is the only one who will be able to advise you on what to do. Depending on the circumstances, you vet may suggest:

- **Regular check-ups** at least twice a year and this may include repeating the blood test.
- **Close Monitoring** to detect the onset of symptoms as early as possible.
- Ensure a healthy lifestyle for your cat so that she/he will be strong enough to fight infection. This includes:
  - An appropriate vaccination programme.
  - A high quality balanced diet.
  - Regular worming.

## What if my cat already has these symptoms?

If your cat shows symptoms and is confirmed as positive to one or more of these tests, it is essential for you to seek veterinary advice. Only your vet will be able to suggest the correct treatment to improve the health and comfort of your cat in addition to the measures above.

## Aireworth Vets recommends

FeLV and FIV are serious and sometimes fatal diseases, which are only transmitted from cat to cat. The symptoms are non specific and can appear many months or even years after infection. Healthy carriers do occur and, if not detected, can infect other cats.

### Our Advice:

- Have your cat tested regularly. The earlier the detection the greater the chances your cat will live longer.
- If you acquire another cat or kitten, have it tested before allowing it to come into contact with other cats.
- If your cat is infected, regular monitoring by you and your vet will help it lead a normal life despite the infection.
- The most basic advice is to vaccinate your cat against FeLV.