

COMMON CAT DISEASES

Always consult your veterinarian for further information



Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

Cats infected with feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) may not show symptoms until years after the initial infection occurred. Although the virus is slow-acting, a cat's immune system is severely weakened once the disease takes hold. This makes the cat susceptible to various secondary infections. Infected cats receiving supportive medical care and kept in a stress-free, indoor environment can live relatively comfortable lives for months to years before the disease reaches its chronic stages. Your new cat has already been tested for FIV at the League for Animal Welfare.

Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV)

First discovered in the 1960s, feline leukemia virus is a transmittable RNA retrovirus that can severely inhibit a cat's immune system. It is one of the most commonly diagnosed causes of disease and death in domestic cats. Because the virus doesn't always manifest symptoms right away, any new cat entering a household—and any sick cat—should be tested for FeLV. Your new cat has already been tested for FeLV at the League for Animal Welfare.

Heartworm

Spread by infected mosquitoes, heartworm is increasingly being recognized as an underlying cause of health problems in domestic cats. Cats are an atypical host for heartworms. Despite its name, heartworm primarily causes lung disease in cats. It is an important concern for any cat owner living in areas densely populated by mosquitoes, and prevention should be discussed with a veterinarian.

Ringworm

Although the name suggests otherwise, ringworm isn't caused by a worm at all—but a fungus that can infect the skin, hair and nails. Not uncommon in cats, this highly contagious disease can lead to patchy, circular areas of hair loss with central red rings. Also known as dermatophytosis, ringworm often spreads to other pets in the household—and to humans, too.

Cancer

Cancer is a class of diseases in which cells grow uncontrollably, invade surrounding tissue and may spread to other areas of the body. As with people, cats can get various kinds of cancer. The disease can be localized (confined to one area, like a tumor) or generalized (spread throughout the body).

Diabetes

Diabetes in cats is a complex disease caused by either a lack of the hormone insulin or an inadequate response to insulin. After a cat eats, her digestive system breaks food into various components, including glucose—which is carried into her cells by insulin. When a cat does not produce insulin or cannot utilize it normally, her blood sugar levels elevate. The result is hyperglycemia, which, if left untreated, can cause many complicated health problems for a cat.

Your cat will need yearly vaccinations to help keep them well. Refer to the “General Adoption Info” page in your folder for their upcoming needs.



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