



Myths and Truths About FIV

FIV stands for Feline Immunodeficiency Virus, a condition that weakens a cat's immune system. There are a lot of myths and misunderstandings about FIV. Let's break down some of the myths and rumors about FIV...

Myth: My other cats will get FIV from eating out of the same bowls or sleeping with a FIV+ cat.

Truth: FIV is only transmitted through blood transfusions, serious penetrating bite wounds, or intercourse. Other cats cannot get FIV through casual contact a FIV + cat.

Myth: Cats with FIV don't live long and require special care.

Truth: Many FIV+ cats live long, healthy lives. They can live their entire life without ever coming down with any symptoms of FIV. As long as they are not exposed to any other virus or bacteria that their weakened immune system can't handle, they can live healthy, normal lives. For this reason, cats with FIV should be kept indoors, fed a balanced, nutritionally complete diet, and should see a vet twice per year.

Myth: My dogs or children are at risk of contracting FIV.

Truth: FIV is a species-specific disease. It cannot be transmitted to humans or any other animal. Your dog, horse, iguana or gerbil cannot contract FIV.

FIV is NOT Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV). FeLV is a separate species-specific virus that is more contagious than FIV. Cats with FIV must live indoors and can happily live with other indoor, non-aggressive cats. They need to be protected from bacteria and viruses in the outdoor environment that could hurt them due to their weakened immune systems. (Regular vaccinations, spaying/neutering, and treatment for fleas, mites and worms are important for FIV+ cats.)