



THE FELINE

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A MAGRANE PET MEDICAL CENTER INSERT FOR CAT LOVERS, SPRING 2014

FELINE LEUKEMIA - IS MY CAT AT RISK ??

The name “Feline Leukemia” seems designed to strike fear into the hearts of cat lovers. Contrary to what many of us think, FeLV (as it is called) is not a specific disease, but rather a virus that causes a wide variety of serious illnesses. Because it impairs feline immune systems, FeLV can serve as the root cause for feline anemia, toxoplasmosis, kidney problems, infectious peritonitis, and lymphosarcoma. In addition, infected cats may be attacked by common bacteria, viruses, and fungus that cause signs such as colds, stomach problems, and skin and mouth sores. Of course, cats infected by the FeLV virus do not exhibit all of these problems, but the possibility of FeLV infection is always there for any exposed, unprotected cat.



First identified in 1964, the FeLV virus is now regarded as the leading non-traumatic cause of death, nationwide, in adult cats. Before the vaccine became available, it was the root cause of most Feline Lymphoma cases. This was due to our large population of outdoor, barn, and feral cats that spread the virus far and wide. FeLV enters the cat's body through the mucous membranes, and is contracted from the saliva, feces, and urine of infected cats. It is transmitted during close contact between cats, such as licking, sneezing, biting, or spraying urine. There is less chance of transmission during brief inter-cat encounters than between cats who share close contact over a period of time.

FeLV infection is not always fatal to cats, but there is no cure. Some cats' immune systems are able to fight the virus off completely, but this is rare. Most cats who seem to fight off the virus actually store remnants of it within the cat's bone marrow. From there, FeLV can resurrect itself to attack the cat during times of stress to the cat's immune system.

FeLV infection can be detected by initial testing of new pet cats. Two “snap” tests, sixty days apart, are recommended before vaccination. Vaccination is now recommended by the American Association of Feline Practitioners for all kittens, as well as for all cats who venture out of doors.

For cats who NEVER go out of doors and who are not vaccinated for FeLV, it is ESSENTIAL to keep them separate from non-tested felines. Even though a visiting, non-tested kitten or cat looks healthy, there is no guarantee that your cat is safe from the virus that may lurk inside it. If non-tested, non-vaccinated cats come to visit, keep them in a separate room from unprotected cats, and away from window/door screens where other cats come to call.

Although FeLV infection is rarely seen in exclusively indoor cats, our veterinarians are trained to watch for signs of it at every feline exam. For cats that venture outdoors, or who are exposed to stray cats at any time, Magrane recommends the FeLV vaccine, a yearly injection. Vaccination is never without risks, but when thinking about your cats' exposure to the FeLV virus and the possible results, the benefits of the FeLV vaccine can far outweigh the risks. Consult with a veterinarian at Magrane if you have questions about the best protection for your cat!

Feline Tip Sheet Litter box Issues

“Why is my cat doing this?”

“How can I make my cat stop?”

There are many reasons why a cat suddenly stops using his/her litter box. The first step towards finding the solution should always be a complete physical exam by your veterinarian. The exam may include a urinalysis and/or bloodwork to rule out any physical cause for the inappropriate urination. If the problem is determined to be behavioral, the veterinary team can start working with you, the pet owner, to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. Although this type of problem can be extremely frustrating, a majority of the time it just takes some simple changes in the litter, the box location, or the box cleanliness. To help decide if this is true in your cat's case, please take time to ask yourself these simple questions:

- √ Is the litter box located in a quiet, private area away from food and bedding?
- √ Is the same type of litter being used consistently? (Don't coupon shop)
- √ Is the litter box too clean? Cats hate the smell of soap and pine scented products.
- √ Is the litter box too dirty? Scoop daily and change gravel litter once weekly.
- √ Does your cat like the litter you've provided? Many cats prefer clumpable litter or sand because of its small particle size. Litter must also not be too dusty or heavily scented.
- √ How much litter is in the pan? Most cats prefer about 2 inches, HOWEVER, some older cats with arthritic hips might like the box filled at a slant to provide better footing.
- √ Is the number of litter boxes equal to or greater than the number of cats in the house?
- √ Does the litter box have a cover or high sides? Not all cats appreciate these features.
- √ NEVER punish a cat in, on, or around the litter box!! The cat will begin to associate the negative experience with the litter box.
- √ Are the accident areas around the house being cleaned effectively? The smell of urine will keep a cat going back to the same spot. Proper cleaning and treatment of areas is important. Natures Miracle is a product readily available for effective urine clean up.
- √ Has the stress in your cat's life recently been increased? New people in the house, new pets, and other changes in routine can be very stressful to a cat.
- √ In some cases, confinement can be used to retrain your cat to use the litter box. A small room or large kennel can be used to house your cat, food, toys and litter box. This technique will help to retrain the cat to use the litter box because cats will avoid soiling areas they sleep on. After the cat is consistently using its litter box, it can gradually be reintroduced to the house.

Vet Tech coach – Neika Smessaert, RVT
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FRIEND US ON FACEBOOK

Magrane Pet Medical Center prides itself in staying current with the most up-to-date medicine available for your pet. When it comes to social networking, we want to do the same. However, we can't do this without your help. Please search for and friend Magrane Pet Medical Center on Facebook today and begin networking with our clients and staff. It is a fun way to share stories, pictures, and information with people who have something in common—a unique bond with their pets!



by Vikky Warner

Dear Opie,

I will be going on a vacation and will be leaving my cat at home with care from a neighbor. Do you and other cats understand the concept of time passing?

*Sincerely,
Beachbound*

Dear Beachbound,

While we cats may not understand the concept of 24 hours equals a day, we do know what time of the day certain events should be happening. We know our day to day routine. We wake our people up in the morning, we are fed in the morning, we watch our people get ready for work and then we watch our people leave the house. Towards the end of the day, we know it is about time for the garage door to open and for our people to return. We don't watch a clock as people do, but we have our own internal "clock" and it lets us know when these events should be happening. So, is it all right to leave your cat for an extended period of time? That depends on your own cat. Some of us cats are perfectly all right left at home with someone coming in to care for us. There are some things our people can do to help us stay active while they are gone. Get a treat dispensing ball that we can interact with. Fill it up and place it somewhere in the home so that we will come across it and explore. Leave a radio playing softly. (Sometimes you think we're meowing, but we might just be singing along to the radio.) Place an item of clothing, preferably one that you've worn and not washed, in your cats favorite nap place. Your scent will be comforting to your cat. I love to curl up in a shirt one of my people has worn. To help your cat get ready for a boarding facility, I recommend starting when your cat is still a kitten by letting it travel with you. Take your cat various places in its carrier often, just to get it accustomed to travel. My people took me to Magrane Pet Medical Center and the staff was happy to help get me acclimated to visits there. My people would take me there anytime and they helped make it a positive experience for me. I love going to my vet!

Love, Opie

CAT GROOMING AT MAGRANE

Due to popular request, Magrane Pet Medical Center is offering cat grooming. Needed most by long-haired cats, the grooming will include removal of matted hair and shaving to restore a balanced appearance to your pet. Other options include bathing, shaving cats to resemble lions or teddy bears, nail trims, and banishing fleas. For highly nervous cats, we offer mild sedation to make the experience more pleasant for everyone.

Give us a call to schedule your cat's beauty treatment!

