

HERVEY BAY VETERINARY SURGERY

Owner Information Series

FIV - Feline Immunodeficiency Virus.

A retrovirus that causes immunodeficiency disease in domestic cats. “Immunodeficiency” is the medical term for inability to develop a normal immune response. Feline immunodeficiency virus infection is slowly progressive, and infected cats can appear healthy.

CHANGES IN YOUR CAT.

- Inflammation of the gums of the mouth and/or of the tissues surrounding and supporting the teeth.
- Recurrent minor illnesses, especially with upper respiratory and gastrointestinal signs
- Upper respiratory tract disease. Inflammation of the nose, inflammation of the moist tissues of the eye, inflammation of the cornea — the cornea is the clear part of the eye, located in the front of the eyeball.
- Long-term (chronic) kidney insufficiency due to immune-mediated damage to the kidneys
- Persistent diarrhea.
- Long-term (chronic), non-responsive, or recurrent infections of the external ear and skin—from bacterial or fungal infections
- Fever and wasting—especially in later stage
- Eye disease
- Cancer
- Nervous system abnormalities—disruption of normal sleep patterns; behavioral changes (such as pacing and aggression); disorders usually affecting the nerves to the legs and paws.

CAUSES

- Cat-to-cat transmission; usually by bite wounds
- Occasional transmission of the virus at the time of birth.

RISK FACTORS

- Free roaming cats.
- Un-vaccinated cats.

PREVENTIONS.

- **VACCINATE!**
- Prevent contact with feline immunodeficiency virus–positive cats
- Quarantine and test incoming cats for FIV before introducing into households with one or more cats.