

WHAT IS FIV

(Feline Immunodeficiency Virus)

FIV is a much misunderstood virus, which leads to many – otherwise healthy – cats being **euthanased** – in our view **unnecessarily**.

The FIV virus reduces a cat's immune system, and leaves it more vulnerable to other feline infections. That's it – in itself it is NOT life threatening.

FIV CANNOT be transmitted to humans.

FIV positive cats can have, and deserve to have a long and healthy life, their general health requires monitoring, but this is no more than any cat should receive. **A properly cared for FIV cat need not have a shortened life expectancy.** The effectiveness of all cat's immune systems reduce with age. Few would recommend euthanasia just because a cat is old – so why for FIV.

Frequently asked questions about FIV

What is FIV – FIV is a virus which affects **ONLY** cats, and reduces the cat's immune system – put simply, it can't fight off infections as well as a non-FIV cat.

How serious is FIV – In itself it is **NOT** serious, it is other infections which the cat may pick up which can cause a problem.

How if FIV transmitted – through biting, the virus needs to actually enter the blood stream, vast majority of transmissions are through biting in fights.

Can FIV be cured – Sadly **NO**, an FIV cat will always have FIV.

Does my FIV cat need to be put to sleep – **NOT AT ALL**, unless your cat, just the same as a non-FIV cat, has developed another infection from which it is suffering so badly that it cannot be helped, which is not likely.

What can I do to help my FIV cat – Look after it carefully, keep a close eye on its general health and investigate – sooner rather than later – anything unusual, such as not eating.

How long will my FIV cat live – Potentially as long as any other cat, surprisingly there is no shortening of life expectancy with FIV cats, although you do need to keep on top of any infections it may pick up. So if you are vigilant your cat should live a normal length of life.

Is my FIV cat a threat to other cats – If your cat were to fight then yes – but it is your cat you need to protect from other cats which may be carrying infection.

Is my FIV cat a threat to my other cats – It depends, if the cats have lived together for some time then continuing the relationship is probably not going to change the situation, if the cat is a new addition and the cats fight then it would be unwise to introduce an FIV cat, if the FIV cat is placid then they could live in harmony without further infection.

PLEASE REMEMBER FIV IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD