



Common Feline Diseases

Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)

Symptoms

- sneezing
- nasal discharge
- coughing
- watery eyes
- fever
- oral or nasal sores

What is it?

URI is common in a shelter environment and can come on suddenly. The incubation period once a cat is exposed to the virus to when symptoms are most commonly noticed is 5-14 days. URI is contagious to other cats and generally lasts 7-14 days. Cats may require an antibiotic to help treat any secondary, bacterial infection. Ninety percent of feline upper respiratory infections are viral, caused by either feline herpes (also called the “rhinotracheitis” virus) or feline calicivirus.

What You Should Do

Contact the vet clinic to schedule an appointment if you suspect your cat may have a URI. Antibiotics can be given if a bacterial infection is present, but if it is viral, then the virus must run its course. Treatment/recovery averages 7-14 days.

Coccidia

Symptoms

- Diarrhea
- Possible blood or mucous in diarrhea
- Dehydration

What is it?

Coccidia is an intestinal organism. It is most commonly seen in animals under a year of age and is shed through feces. Coccidia is very contagious, especially among young kittens and has a very strong, recognizable odor.

What You Should Do

You will need to collect a stool sample to be analyzed by a veterinarian. We can diagnose your kittens and prescribe medication. Treatment averages 7-21 days. It is important to clean up all fecal matter as soon as possible during treatment to eliminate the possibility of re-infection.



Common Feline Diseases

Panleukopenia (Feline Distemper)

Symptoms

- vomiting
- diarrhea
- dehydration
- lethargy
- sudden death

What is it?

Panleukopenia is a highly infectious viral disease most commonly seen in kittens. Because it is so contagious, cats that are potentially exposed to Panleukopenia should be isolated in an easily cleaned area for 14 days for observation. All cats are vaccinated for panleukopenia at Wayside Waifs. While vaccination generally provides excellent protection, it does not eliminate the possibility of contracting the virus.

Ringworm

Symptoms

- Circular patches of hair loss
- Patches may be red
- Scratching may occur

What is it?

Ringworm is a fungal infection affecting the skin, hair and occasionally nails of animals (and people). Three species of ringworm fungus most commonly affect cats and dogs. It can live in carriers, furniture, carpets, dust, heating vents, furnace filters, etc. It is highly contagious to other pets and humans in the household.



Common Feline Diseases

Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV)

What is it?

FIV, or Feline immunodeficiency virus, is a disease of cats that is quite similar to human HIV/AIDS. Cats can be infected with FIV and enjoy good quality of life for quite some time before developing full blown disease. There is no cure for FIV, and cats with this disease are vulnerable to a number of secondary infections due to a suppressed immune system. Ultimately, this is a fatal disease. FIV is not transferrable to humans.

FIV cats and kittens are difficult to place for adoption. In a shelter environment the disease is spread to other cats through saliva or bites.

Feline leukemia virus (FeLV)

What is it?

Feline leukemia virus is a contagious, viral disease of cats. In addition to causing leukemia, it has been associated with various other types of cancer, anemia, and immune suppression leading to increased susceptibility to various infectious diseases. Although cats may clear initial infection, there is no cure for persistent infection and it is ultimately fatal.

FeLV cats and kittens are difficult to place for adoption. In a shelter environment the disease is spread to other cats through saliva.

All cats and kittens are tested for FeLV prior to adoption.