

# The facts about Feline AIDS\*

\*Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), the cause of feline AIDS is not the same virus as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the cause of human AIDS.

## What is feline AIDS?

**Feline AIDS is caused by infection with feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). FIV causes a potentially fatal viral disease that interferes with the immune system of a cat.**

The virus lives in the blood of the infected cat and is carried in its system throughout its life.

Healthy cats contract the infection through being bitten by an FIV positive cat.

Cats infected with FIV may remain healthy for a number of years. While some infected cats show no sign of disease, others may display initial symptoms such as:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Lethargy
- Swollen lymph nodes

As the disease progresses, symptoms may occur such as:

- Weight loss
- Sores in and around the mouth
- Eye lesions
- Poor coat
- Chronic infections

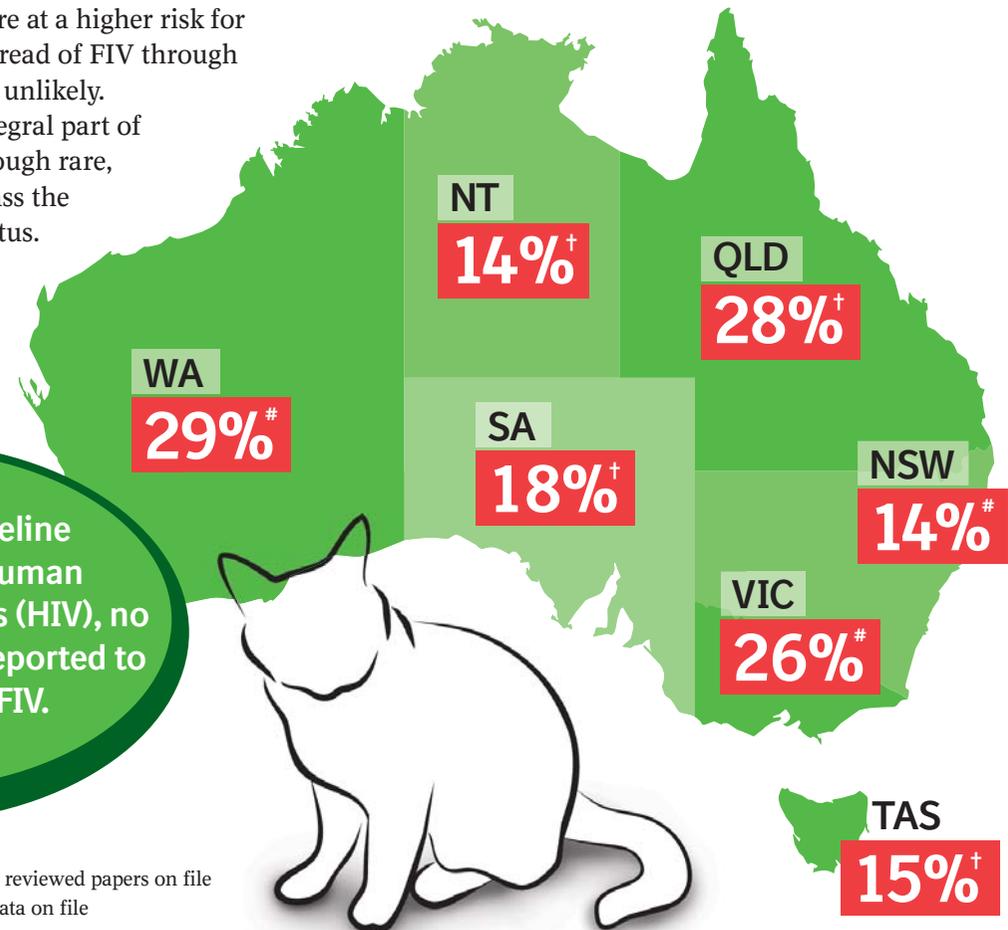
Eventually the immune system becomes too weak to fight off other infections or diseases. As a result, the cat will die from one of these subsequent infections.

## How is the infection contracted?

FIV is spread from cat to cat primarily through bite wounds, the virus being shed in high levels through saliva. Outdoor cats are at a higher risk for contracting the disease. The spread of FIV through watering bowls or grooming is unlikely. An actual bite wound is an integral part of the disease transmission. Although rare, it is possible for a mother to pass the infection on to her unborn foetus.

## How prevalent is FIV in Australia?

It is reported that between **14%** and **29%** of cats in Australia test positive to the disease. Outdoor cats are at the highest risk of disease.



Even though this feline virus is related to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), no human has ever been reported to be infected with FIV.

<sup>#</sup> Published peer reviewed papers on file  
<sup>†</sup> Unpublished data on file

## What can I do to prevent feline AIDS?

There is no treatment or cure for an FIV infected cat. However a vaccine is available that can aid in the prevention of infection with FIV.

Talk with your veterinarian about the best vaccination program for your cat.

Along with vaccination, other health management measures include:

- Limiting exposure of indoor cats to outdoor cats
- Using caution when introducing a new cat to a multi-cat household
- Having a new cat tested prior to joining the household
- Isolating an aggressive cat from other cats

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## FIV vaccination guideline

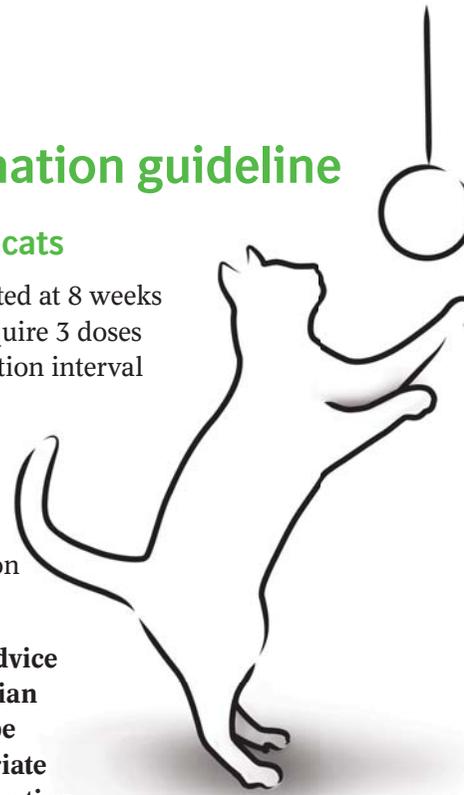
### Unvaccinated cats

Those cats presented at 8 weeks of age or older require 3 doses at an intervaccination interval of 2-4 weeks.

### Vaccinated cats

Annual vaccination is recommended.

**Please seek the advice of your veterinarian who will prescribe the most appropriate vaccination and testing regime for your pet.**



**Fel-O-Vax<sup>®</sup> FIV**  
AIDS in Protection **VACCINE**

Boehringer Ingelheim Pty. Limited.  
ABN 52 000 452 308. Animal Health Division,  
78 Waterloo Rd, North Ryde NSW 2113.

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# Is your cat at risk of Feline AIDS?

Find out the facts about this deadly disease