



Thinking of Adopting a Feline Leukemia Positive Cat?

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We all want our pets to live as long as we do! Chances are that's not going to be the case, no matter what type of pet you adopt. While it is true that a cat with feline leukemia (FeLV) may have a shorter life expectancy, many of these cats are quite healthy for years. You needn't anticipate that, because a cat is positive, it will be "sickly." As with any pet, many of the health issues that might arise are minor and treatable.

Questions commonly asked:

How is FeLV transmitted?

Transmission occurs either cat-to-cat (from bite wounds, close casual contact, such as grooming or shared dishes or litter pans) or from the mother (transplacental or transmammary). In other words, you needn't become a social pariah amongst your cat-guardian friends! (You aren't going to bring feline leukemia into their homes on your clothing or skin.)

Which cats are at risk?

Male cats (especially intact males) are at higher risk because of their behavioral patterns. Free-roaming cats are at higher risk because of contact with other cats. Cats in multi-cat households are at risk because of increased contact as well as increased stress.

What can I expect regarding disease?

Onset of disease occurs over a period of months to years after infection. A healthy immune system can force the virus into latency early in the infection phase. Most associated diseases (non-cancerous or cancerous) result from immunosuppression. The virus attacks the blood, lymph, and immune systems directly, but any system in the body can be susceptible to secondary infections due to immunosuppression.

How is FeLV diagnosed?

There are a number of different identifying tests for FeLV. Your veterinarian can guide you as to which test is appropriate at which time. You should know that some of the tests veterinarians use for early detection have a higher incidence of false-positive results. In other words if you are adopting a kitten that is positive, there is a chance it will later test negative. (Re-testing 12 weeks after the initial test using an "IFA" test may then yield a negative result.)

Things to keep in mind:

- DON'T adopt a FeLV positive cat if you have a non-infected cat.
- DO adopt two FeLV positive cats if you do not have any other cats! (While crowding is not healthy, keeping a pair of siblings or buddies together can actually lower stress.)
- DON'T allow a FeLV positive cat to go outdoors.
- DO spay and neuter your pets!

Adopting a feline leukemia positive cat is good for the cat, and good for your karma!

If you or someone you know is considering adopting a feline leukemia positive cat, please read on...

Feline Leukemia Kitten Duo Seeks A Home



*Maxey and Zorey with their mom
in a backyard in Queens.*

Maxey and Zorey first came into contact with humans when they were five weeks old — when their outdoor, but very sweet, mother brought them into a backyard in Queens. As soon as the kittens stopped nursing, their mother was spayed and adopted to a neighbor. Now on their own, the kittens were understandably skeptical of humans. But as the weeks passed, they apparently decided that, aside from being great providers of food, their new human friends were fun to interact with as well.

Unfortunately, Maxey and Zorey's new-found human friends already had several feline companions of their own who were unwelcoming of new furry faces around the house. So the kittens remained outdoors. They were tested for feline leukemia and FIV. Test results revealed Maxey had feline leukemia, and a re-test several weeks later showed Zorey also was positive for the disease.

The two kittens were removed from the backyard. Maxey was neutered and Zorey spayed, and together, were placed in foster care, where they now are awaiting adoption. Neither kitten shows any symptoms of the disease at this time. They are friendly, loving kittens who should be placed together in a home without any other felines. If you or someone you know

is interested in giving Maxey and Zorey a loving home, please contact the Mayor's Alliance at info@AnimalAllianceNYC.org.

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