



# Affordable Veterinary Services



7660 Kayne Blvd, Columbus, Ga 31909

Phone: 706-221-7600

[www.affordablevetservices.org](http://www.affordablevetservices.org)

APP: Affordable Vet Services GA

## **Important Reasons To Spay Or Neuter Your Pet**

More than 4 million pets are euthanized in U.S. animal shelters each year simply because they have no home. Many are puppies and kittens less than 6 months old. Help stop this needless loss of life. Spay or neuter your pet.

### **Spaying your female pet (ovariohysterectomy):**

Removal of the ovaries and uterus. Ideal age is 4 to 6 months.

- Eliminates the risk of ovarian cancer
- If spayed before the first heat cycle your pet has a less than 1 percent chance of developing breast cancer.
- If spayed after one heat cycle, your pet has an 8 percent chance of developing breast cancer.
- If spayed after two heat cycles, the risk increases to 26 percent.
- After two years, no protective benefit exists.
- Pets with diabetes or epilepsy should be spayed to prevent hormonal changes that may interfere with medication.
- Eliminates unwanted litter.

### **Neutering your male pet (castration):**

Removal of the testicles and spermatic cord. Ideal age is 4 to 6 months.

- Eliminates the risk of testicular cancer, the second most common tumor in male dogs.
- Greatly reduces the risk of Prostate cancer and prostatitis.
- Reduces the risk of perianal tumors.
- Reduces roaming and fighting
- Eliminates spraying or marking in males neutered before 6 months of age or before the onset of these behaviors.
- Eliminates the risk and spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- Eliminates unwanted litter

### **Common myths Spaying or neutering your pet does not:**

- Cause laziness or hyperactivity
- Reduce its instinct or to protect your family and home
- Cause immature behaviors
- Alter its personality in any manner
- Postpone or delay normal behavioral maturity

Our staff members can answer your questions about spaying or neutering your pet or any other procedure your pet may undergo at our hospital. Please don't hesitate to ask.

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## Kitten Protocol:

- ★ Please bring any records from the pet store, breeder or individual to the first appointment.
- ★ Try to bring a stool sample with you to avoid discomfort in your pet

### ***First Visit 6-9 weeks***

- Initial Exam with Doctor - \$35
- 1st Feline Distemper vaccine - \$19
- Fecal (Checking for intestinal parasites, we try to get a fecal sample on all kittens at least twice during their initial vaccine visits.) - \$29.28
- Dewormer - The price of dewormer varies depending on what is used, which also depends on what kind (if any) of intestinal parasite(s) are found.
- Heartworm / Flea Prevention - Free dose on 1st visit, if available (Heartworm and flea preventions are recommended once a month, every month.)
- Kitten Brochure Packet

### ***Second Visit 9-12 weeks***

- Exam with Technician - \$7
- 2nd Feline Distemper vaccine - \$19
- Recheck Fecal - \$29.28, Dewormer, if needed
- Heartworm / Flea prevention monthly - Price varies by product

### ***Third Visit 12-15 weeks \*\****

- Exam with Technician - \$7 / *OR with Doctor \$35, if Rabies is being given*
- +/- Rabies Vaccine - \$13
- FELV/FIV/HW combo test \*\* - \$43
- 3rd Feline Distemper vaccine \$19 +/- Leukemia (if negative) - \$30
- Recheck Fecal - \$29.28, Dewormer, if needed
- Heartworm / Flea prevention monthly - Price varies by product

### ***Fourth Visit 16 + weeks \*\****

- Exam with Technician - \$7 / *OR with Doctor \$35, if Rabies is being given*
- +/- Rabies vaccine - \$13
- 4th Feline Distemper vaccine \$19 +/- Leukemia (if negative) - \$30
- Heartworm / Flea prevention monthly - Price varies by product
- Spay \$95 or Neuter \$70 can be scheduled at this time also

\*\* Combo testing - We prefer to test kittens when they are older, at the 3rd visit with Rabies vaccine, to decrease false positive (or negative) results. However, if the kitten is being introduced to a household with other negative cats, then we may test it earlier. We will counsel the owner and decide about when to test the kitten (technician, if comfortable, or doctor). Any positive tests will be confirmed with a 2nd at a later visit.

## **Heartworm Prevention & Flea/Tick Control :**

**Revolution Plus** = heartworm prevention, intestinal parasites, fleas, ticks 6 weeks old, topical application

**Centragard** = heartworm prevention, intestinal parasites, 8 weeks, topical application

**Frontline Plus** = fleas and ticks, 8 weeks, topical application

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## **What To Expect After Your Pet's Vaccination**

Congratulations. By vaccinating your pet, you have taken an important step toward protecting your pet and your family.

Vaccination is the most common veterinary preventive measure in history. It's a safe and effective way to protect pets and people from serious disease.

It's common for your pet to experience mild side effects from vaccination. Typically starting within hours of vaccination, any symptoms are most often mild and usually do not persist for more than a few days. This is a normal response by your pet's immune system during the process of developing protective immunity.

### **Common symptoms your pet may experience :**

- Mild fever
- Decrease in social behavior
- Diminished appetite or activity
- Sneezing or other respiratory signs with intranasal vaccines
- Discomfort or mild swelling at the injection site

Rare side effects, such as an allergic reaction, may occur. Your pet may experience symptoms of a more serious reaction to the vaccine within minutes or hours of the vaccination.

### **Rare symptoms could include:**

- Swelling to face and legs
- Repeated vomiting or diarrhea
- Whole body itching
- Difficulty Breathing
- Collapse

If your pet experiences any of these rare symptoms, you should contact your veterinarian immediately, as your pet may require additional medical treatment.

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## **Pets, Parasites and People**

Dogs and cats are not just pets. They are treated like members of the family. And like any member of your family, it's important to keep your companion animal healthy and free of parasites.

It is fairly common for a dog or cat to become infected with an internal or external parasite at some point in its lifetime. Parasites can affect your pet in a variety of ways, ranging from simple irritation to causing life-threatening conditions if left untreated. Some parasites can even infect and transmit diseases to you and your family.

Your veterinarian can help prevent, accurately diagnose and safely treat parasites and other health problems that not only affect your dog or cat, but also the safety of you and your family.

For more information on how parasites affect your dog or cat, the health risks to people and prevention tips, please visit us at [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org).

### **What is a zoonotic disease?**

Zoonoses, or zoonotic diseases, are those diseases that can be transmitted directly or indirectly from animals to humans. For example, some worms can be transmitted in the environment.

### **What is a vector-borne disease?**

Vector-borne diseases are those transmitted by fleas or ticks among other parasites that infest dogs and cats. They can affect pets and people. Ticks can transmit a large number of "vector-borne" diseases in North America including ehrlichiosis, Lyme disease, relapsing fever, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia.

### **Parasites that may affect your pet**

* Coccidia	* Giardia	* Mange Mites	* Ticks
* Ear Mites	* Heartworms	* Roundworms	* Toxoplasmosis
* Fleas	* Tapeworms	* Whipworms	* Hookworms

### **Common questions about pets and parasites**

Do fleas and ticks on my pet present a health risk to my family?

Yes. Fleas and ticks can carry and either directly or indirectly transmit several potential illnesses of humans. For example, rickettsiosis (infection with *Rickettsia*) can be transmitted directly by ticks. Bartonellosis (infection with *Bartonella*) is transmitted between cats by fleas and then may spread to people. Also, fleas serve as an intermediate host for tapeworms, which can infect both your pet and humans.

What kind of internal parasites or worms can infect my cat or dog?

There are a number of intestinal worms that can infect dogs and cats, and they vary according to the species. In general, these include roundworms, hookworms, whipworms and tapeworms, and they are very prolific. In fact, one worm can produce more than 100,000 eggs per day, which are then passed in the pet's feces and spread throughout the area the pet roams. Once in the environment, some of these eggs can remain infectious and present a health risk for your pet and humans for years.

Are heartworms a parasite I should be concerned about for my pet?

Yes. Heartworms can be a very serious problem for both dogs and cats, especially those in mosquito-infested areas, as mosquitoes are a vector and intermediate host for the pest. Heartworms can kill or seriously debilitate pets that are infected with them. That's because heartworms live in the bloodstream, lungs and heart of infected pets. Your Veterinarian can do a blood test to determine if your pet has heartworm disease. A year-round preventive program is most effective to keep pets free of heartworms.

If my dog or cat has intestinal worms, how can these parasites infect humans?

Roundworms are the most common intestinal parasite of pets and the most likely to be transmitted to humans. Humans can accidentally ingest infective worm eggs that have been passed through the pet's feces and left in the environment. The eggs can then hatch in the human's intestinal tract, and the immature worms can travel to various tissues in the body, including the eyes and brain, potentially causing serious infections.

For more frequently asked questions and answers, please visit us at [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org) or consult with your veterinarian.

## **Reducing risks for your family**

You can reduce the risk of parasitic infection to your family by eliminating parasites from pets; restricting access to contaminated areas, such as sandboxes, pet "walk areas," and other high-traffic areas; and practicing good personal hygiene.

Disposing of pet feces on a regular basis can help remove potentially infective worm eggs before they become distributed in the environment and are picked up or ingested by pets or humans.

## **Year-round prevention**

Parasites can infect your pet any time of year. External parasites, such as fleas and ticks, may be less prevalent outside during certain times of the year; however, they often survive in the house during the winter months, creating an uninterrupted life cycle. Other internal parasites, such as worms, may affect your pet all year long. That's why it's important to consult with your veterinarian to implement a year-round parasite control program.

## **What can I do?**

Responsible pet parasite control can reduce the risks associated with transmission of parasitic diseases from pets to people. By following a few simple guidelines, pet owners can better protect their pets and their family.

- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Use a preventative flea and/or tick treatment year-round.
- Only feed pets cooked or prepared food (not raw meat).
- Minimize exposure to high-traffic pet areas.
- Clean up pet feces regularly.
- Visit your veterinarian for annual testing and physical examination.
- Administer worming medications as recommended by your veterinarian.
- Ask your veterinarian about parasite infection risks and effective year-round preventative control measures administered monthly.

For more important information about parasite control guidelines, ask your veterinarian or visit us at [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org).

## **The Companion Animal Parasite Council**

The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) is an independent council of veterinarians and other animal health care professionals established to create guidelines for the optimal control of internal and external parasites that threaten the health of pets and people. It brings together broad expertise in parasitology, internal medicine, public health, veterinary law, private practice and association leadership.

Initially convened in 2002, CAPC was formed with the express purpose of changing the way veterinary professionals and pet owners approach parasite management. The CAPC advocates best practices for protecting pets from parasitic infections and reducing the risk of zoonotic parasite transmission.

For more information about how parasites may affect your pet, please visit us at [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org).



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## Heartworms, Pets & People

Companion Animal Parasite Council  
[www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org)

## Heartworms and Your Pet

Heartworms are known to occur throughout the U.S., and though they have been

100 percent preventable for decades, they are still common in dogs and cats.

Transmitted by mosquitoes, they are among the most damaging canine and feline

parasites. Heartworms are transmitted by feeding mosquitoes and, once mature, take residence in the heart and large vessels of the lungs.

Heartworms can be a very serious problem for both dogs and cats, especially those in mosquito infested areas. Because heartworms live in the bloodstream, lungs and heart, they can kill or seriously debilitate pets that are infected with them.



## See Your Veterinarian

Your veterinarian can conduct a simple blood test to determine if your pet has heartworms or heartworm disease. Diagnosis in cats can be more challenging. A year-round preventive program is recommended by authorities and is most effective to keep pets free of heartworms.

## Common questions about heartworms

### *Should I be concerned about heartworms in my pet?*

Yes. Heartworms are transmitted by the bite of mosquitoes from an infected pet. They must go through the mosquito, not directly from dog to dog. Heartworms can kill or seriously debilitate pets that are infected with them. That's because heartworms live in the bloodstream, lungs and heart of infected pets.

### *How will heartworms affect my dog?*

The heartworm larvae deposited by the feeding mosquito eventually migrate to the chambers of the heart or into the vessels of the lungs. Once in the heart, the worms can affect blood flow throughout the body. Heartworms may be up to a foot long and your pet may have anywhere from one to several dozen in their heart and adjacent blood vessels.

Heartworm infection can affect many different organs of the dog. While the heart and lungs may suffer most, other organs such as the kidneys and liver may be impacted. A veterinarian may suspect that an animal has been infected if an active animal tires easily or shows shortness of breath or coughing; however, one or more tests conducted by your veterinarian may be necessary to determine whether or not your dog has heartworms. There may be no signs at all. This makes testing and prevention all the more important to do before signs begin.

### *Can my cat be affected by heartworms?*

Yes. However, feline heartworm disease can differ significantly from its canine counterpart, and may require the use of several diagnostic tests or procedures to confirm a diagnosis. Cats with clinical heartworm disease usually present with respiratory signs such as coughing and/or difficulty breathing, or even intermittent vomiting not associated with eating. Other signs include weight loss and/or diarrhea without accompanying respiratory signs. The respiratory signs are difficult to differentiate from those observed with feline asthma.

### *How do I prevent my pets from getting heartworms?*

All dogs and cats are at risk, even those animals that primarily live indoors. However, heartworms are preventable.

Ask your veterinarian about heartworm prevention. Preventive treatment should begin at six or eight weeks of age in puppies and after tests have been conducted in older dogs to determine if your dog has already been infected. If your dog does have heartworms, your veterinarian can advise you about treatment options. In dogs over six

months of age, a blood test is recommended before starting medication.



## Tips to protect your family and your pet.

Wash your hands well after contact with an animal.

- Do not allow children to put dirt in their mouths.
- Pick up dog and cat waste from your yard daily, especially where both children and animals play.
- Cover home sandboxes to protect them from fecal contamination.
- Have your pet tested regularly (one or two times a year) for parasites by a veterinarian and administer year-round preventive medications to control internal parasites that present a risk to your pet and your family.

## Why should I control parasites for my pet year-round?

Isolated cases of human infection have been reported, but heartworm is generally not considered a risk to human health. However, due to the large number of internal and external parasites and the high risk of pet infection, controlling parasites year-round is the most reliable way to ensure the highest level of health for your pet and well-being of your family. Year-round prevention is the most effective way to control cat and dog parasites and the diseases they can carry.

## The Companion Animal Parasite Council

The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) is an independent council of veterinarians and other healthcare professionals established to create guidelines for the optimal control of internal and external parasites that threaten the health of pets and people. It brings together broad expertise in parasitology, internal medicine, human health care, public health, veterinary law, private practice and association leadership.

For more information about how parasites may affect your pet, please visit us at [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org). The CAPC guidelines are endorsed by The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA).

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## Fleas, Ticks & Your Pet

**Companion Animal Parasite Council**

**[www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org)**

Fleas are probably the most common ectoparasite (external parasite) of dogs and cats worldwide. In addition to just being a nuisance, fleas are responsible for flea allergy dermatitis (FAD) in dogs and cats, which is estimated to account for over 50 percent of all the dermatological cases reported to veterinarians.

Ticks are also ectoparasites. Ticks are important vectors of a number of diseases, including Lyme disease. Ticks are second only to mosquitoes as vectors of human disease, both infectious and toxic. Control and prevention of ticks is extremely important in reducing the risk of disease associated with ticks.

## **Year-round prevention**

Parasites can infect your pet any time of year. While external parasites, such as fleas and ticks, may be less of a problem during certain times of the year, depending on where you live, internal parasites (worms) can be present year-round. That's why it's important to consult with your veterinarian to implement a year round parasite control program.

## **Common questions about fleas and ticks**

### *Why should I control parasites for my pet year-round?*

Due to the large number of internal and external parasites and the high risk of pet infection, controlling parasites year-round is the most reliable way to ensure the highest level of health for your pet and well-being of your family. Year-round prevention is the most effective way to control cat and dog parasites and the diseases they can carry. People think their pets are safe during the colder months, but pets are susceptible to flea and tick infections at all times of the year. And regardless of the weather, many of these pests can even survive in your home – in carpeting, on furniture and in the bedroom.

### *Do fleas on my pet present a health risk to my family?*

Yes. Fleas can carry and transmit several potential illnesses of importance to humans, including typhus and plague, and can transmit “cat scratch disease” (infection with Bartonella) among cats who can then spread the disease to humans. Additionally, fleas serve as an intermediate host for tapeworms, which can infect your pet and occasionally humans.

### *What human-health problems are associated with ticks?*

Ticks transmit a large number of diseases in North America. These diseases include Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, relapsing fever, ehrlichiosis, tularemia and tick paralysis. It is important for the health of your pet, as well as the safety of your family, to include ticks in your pet's year-round parasite control program.

### *What if my cat never goes outside?*

Indoor cats have less chance of acquiring fleas and ticks, but they should be regularly checked, just in case. Other pets and/or family members can be hosts for fleas and ticks (on pant cuffs or socks) and bring them home to your indoor cat.

## **Tips to protect your family and your pet.**

1. Wash your hands well after contact with an animal.
2. Do not allow children to put dirt in their mouths.
3. Pick up dog and cat waste from your yard daily, especially in areas where both children and animals play.
4. Cover home sandboxes to protect them from fecal contamination.
5. Have your pet tested regularly (at least once a year) for parasites by a veterinarian and administer year-round preventive medications to control internal parasites that present a risk to your pet and your family.

## What is a vector-borne disease?

Vector-borne diseases are those transmitted by fleas or ticks (among other parasites) that infest dogs and cats. They can affect pets and people. Ticks can transmit a large number of “vector borne” diseases in North America including ehrlichiosis, Lyme disease, relapsing fever, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia.



## The Companion Animal Parasite Council

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For more information about how parasites may affect your pet, please visit us at [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org). The CAPC guidelines are endorsed by The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA).



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## Felines and your Family

**Companion Animal Parasite Council**

**[www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org)**

Cat owners know the joy these loving creatures bring to our lives. Because cats are independent by nature, they can be easier to care for when it comes to sharing our homes with them. However, cats can conceal their illnesses very effectively so be sure to have your cat examined at least yearly. To help keep your cat healthy, feed only prepared or cooked foods. By following your veterinarian's recommendations and having your pet tested for parasites annually, you can protect your cat and your family from these potentially harmful parasites all year long.

### Parasites that may affect your pet

- Coccidia
- Giardia
- Mange Mites
- Ticks

- Ear Mites
- Heartworms
- Roundworms
- Toxoplasmosis
- Fleas
- Hookworms
- Tapeworms
- Whipworms

## Year-round prevention

The use of year-round heartworm and broad-spectrum parasite medications, as well as appropriate flea and/or tick products, is the foundation of an effective parasite control program for your cat.

## What can I do?

Responsible pet parasite control can reduce the risks associated with transmission of parasitic diseases from pets to people. By following a few simple guidelines, pet owners can better protect their pets and their family.

- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Visit your veterinarian for annual testing and physical examination.
- Minimize exposure to high-traffic pet areas.
- Ask your veterinarian about parasite infection risks and effective year-round preventative control measures administered monthly.

## Heartworm

Heartworms represent an increasingly recognized problem in cats. As in dogs, heartworms are transmitted by mosquitoes and, once mature, take residence in the right side of the heart and the large vessels of the lungs. For cats, the prevalence of heartworm infection is directly related to the number of infected dogs in the area.

How do I prevent my pet from getting heartworm?

Heartworms are found in cats in all 50 states, so all cats are at risk, even those animals that live indoors. However, heartworms are preventable. Ask your veterinarian about heartworm prevention. Preventive treatment should begin after a blood test has been conducted to determine if your cat has already been exposed or is infected.

## Fleas and Ticks

Fleas are probably the most common ectoparasite (external parasite) of cats worldwide. In addition to just being a nuisance, fleas are responsible for flea allergy dermatitis (FAD) in cats, which is estimated to account for over 50 percent of all the dermatological cases reported to veterinarians.

Ticks are also ectoparasites. Ticks are second only to mosquitoes as vectors of human disease, both infectious and toxic. Control and prevention of ticks is extremely important in reducing the risk of disease associated with ticks.

How do I prevent my cat from getting fleas?

To control fleas, you must stop them from reproducing. Carpets, pet bedding, furniture, and other indoor areas where your cat spends much time will contain the highest number of developing fleas. Frequent vacuuming of these areas and frequent washing of pet bedding can greatly reduce the number of developing fleas inside your home.

## Toxoplasma gondii

Toxoplasma is a tiny parasite that infects people as well as birds and other animals. Only cats and other members of the cat family shed Toxoplasma in their feces. Cats may shed the parasite in their feces for 7-21 days the first time they get infected with Toxoplasma. If they are allowed outside, pet cats can get infected when they catch and eat animals.

Protect your environment

Keep water going to sewage treatment plants or septic systems Toxoplasma free. Sewage treatment may not kill Toxoplasma in cat feces. Throwing cat feces or litter down the toilet or outdoors could allow more Toxoplasma

parasites to get into our rivers and oceans, putting wildlife at risk of infection, including sea otters.

- Put cat feces in plastic bags for disposal in a sanitary landfill.
- Remove cat feces from your yard.

Toxoplasma lives for months in soil and can be carried over long distances in water. Following these guidelines will help prevent Toxoplasma infections in cats, people and wildlife.

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The CAPC guidelines are endorsed by The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and The American Heartworm Society (AHS).



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## **Feline Leukemia and FIV**

The feline leukemia virus (FeLV) and feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) are both contagious diseases found in cats throughout the world. These viral infections can cause serious illness and can not be cured but may be managed with medication.

## What is the Feline Leukemia Virus?

Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is a type of virus known as a retrovirus that inserts pieces of itself into the genetic

material of an infected cat's cells. The virus gets into the bloodstream of a cat and can cause a wide variety of illnesses.

### **Who gets it?**

All cats worldwide are susceptible to infection with FeLV, particularly cats less than 2 years of age. The infection is more common in cats that are ill, very young, or have another reason to be at higher risk of infection such as living with an FeLV-infected cat. Cats do not transmit FeLV to people.

### **How is it spread?**

Cats get infected with FeLV when they come into direct contact with an infected cat. The virus is shed in high levels in the saliva, and transmission during grooming, from a bite wound, or even sharing food and water bowls may occur. An infected cat may spread the virus to her kittens, either while nursing or even before birth. Cats most at risk are those living with or born to an FeLV-infected cat and those cats allowed outdoors.

### **What are the symptoms?**

FeLV infection can cause a wide variety of symptoms in cats. It can cause cancer and anemia or other blood disorders and also hinders a cat's ability to fight off infection. As a result, frequent infections that do not typically affect healthy cats may be found in FeLV-infected cats and cat even be fatal. Infected cats are usually asymptomatic at first, but develop increasingly severe health problems.

### **How is it diagnosed?**

There are two types of tests for FeLV infection commonly in use, both of which look for pieces of the virus in the blood. The most commonly used tests, known as ELISAs, are screening tests that can be performed at a veterinarian's office and look for free pieces of the virus in the bloodstream. Another type of test, usually used as a confirmatory test, is known as an IFA and looks for pieces of the virus inside the cat's white blood cells; this test must be sent to a diagnostic laboratory.

### **What is the treatment?**

Unfortunately there is no treatment to cure FeLV infected cats. All treatment is supportive and aimed at preventing or minimizing symptoms and secondary infections that result from suppression of the immune system. Infected cats should be spayed or neutered and kept indoors only away from uninfected cats. Balanced proper nutrition and regular veterinary visits are critical to maintaining the health of infected cats.

With appropriate care infected cats may remain apparently healthy for many months or even years, but most infected cats will succumb to fatal FeLV associated disease within two to three years of infection.

### **How do I prevent it?**

All preventive measures centered around prevention of exposure of cats to FeLV-infected cats. These include:

- Keeping cats indoors or, if allowed outdoors with supervision or in an enclosure only.
- If you have both FeLV-infected cats and non-infected cats, keep them separate and do not allow them to share food bowls, water bowls, or litter boxes.
- Know the status of any cat before introducing him or her to your household, and the status of all cats in your household.
  - Cats should be tested for FeLV before introduction to a new household. If negative, cats should be re-tested again 60 days later to ensure the first test did not miss a very recent infection.
- Talk to your veterinarian about FeLV vaccination to see if it is appropriate for your cat(s).

## **What is the Feline Immunodeficiency Virus?**

The feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) is a type of virus known as a retrovirus that inserts pieces of itself into

the genetic material of an infected cat's cells. It is similar to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and may cause similar disease, but FIV does not infect people.

### **Who gets it?**

All cats worldwide are susceptible to infection with FIV. Because bite wounds are the primary means of transmission, un-neutered male cats that roam unsupervised and get into fights are most frequently infected. Outwardly healthy cats may be infected, but FIV is more commonly found in sick cats.

### **How is it spread?**

Cats typically get infected with FIV when they are bitten by an infected cat. Casual transmission from grooming or sharing food and water bowls does not appear to be a common way that FIV is spread, unlike FeLV. Infected cats rarely spread the virus to their kittens although it does occasionally happen

### **What are the symptoms?**

FIV infection can cause a wide variety of symptoms in cats. Infected cats are usually asymptomatic at first and may remain apparently healthy for long periods of time (years) or may develop increasingly severe health problems. FIV infection damages a cat's immune system and makes them susceptible to infection from common viruses, bacteria, and fungi that usually do not make healthy cats sick,

### **How is it diagnosed?**

Blood tests look for antibodies against the virus in a cat's blood stream. The most commonly used tests, known as ELISAs, are screening tests that can be performed at a veterinarian's office. Another type of test, usually used as a confirmatory test, is known as a Western Blot; this test looks for antibodies to the virus but in a different way than the ELISA test does. Unfortunately, currently available tests are unable to distinguish antibodies produced during natural infection from those produced as a result of vaccination or even transmission of maternal antibodies to kittens.

### **What is the treatment?**

Unfortunately there is no treatment to cure FIV infected cats. All treatment is supportive and aimed at preventing or minimizing symptoms and secondary infections that result from suppression of the immune system. Infected cats should be spayed or neutered and kept indoors only, away from uninfected cats. Balanced proper nutrition and regular veterinary visits are critical to maintaining the health of infected cats. With appropriate care infected cats may remain apparently healthy for many months or even years, and there have been cases where FIV-infected cats live a long life and die from non-FIV associated illness.

### **How do I prevent it?**

All preventive measures center around prevention of exposure of cats to FIV-infected cats. These include:

- Keep cats indoors or, if allowed outdoors with supervision or in an enclosure only.
- If you have both FIV-infected cats and non-infected cats, keep them separate if they are likely to fight and bite each other.
- Know the status of any cat before introducing him or her to your household, and the status of all cats in your household.
  - Cats should be tested for FIV before introduction to a new household. If negative, cats should be re-tested again 60 days later to ensure the first test did not miss a very recent infection.
  - Kittens can be tested for FIV but results but results but interpreted carefully. A negative test in a kitten less than 5 months of age is almost always accurate, but positive results in young kittens are frequently inaccurate because the test will pick up antibodies from the mother cat as well. Kittens with a positive FIV test result should be rested when they are 5-6 months of age to

confirm their status.

- Talk to your veterinarian about FIV vaccination to see if it is appropriate for your cat(s).

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### *Disease Risks For Cats:*



SITUATION	RISK FACTORS	DISEASE AGENT
Cat is an indoor cat and never goes outside	Very difficult to make sure the cat never gets outside where outdoor cats could be roaming. Introduction of a new pet into the home. Children in home visit the cute new shelter kittens next door and bring disease agents back to the house on shoes or clothing.	Any infectious feline disease*. Common kitten diseases and any infectious feline disease.
Cat is an indoor/outdoor or strictly outdoor cat	Cat is in constant contact with other outdoor cats. Cat prowls into wildlife areas.	Any infectious feline disease. Rabies or any other feline disease.

Kitten	Kittens are particularly susceptible because their immune systems haven't fully developed.	Any infectious feline disease.
Geriatric cat	Older cats may have weakened immune systems and be susceptible.	Any infectious feline disease.
Cat is boarded or goes to a groomer	High level of interaction with other cats. Facilities may require vaccination records, but total compliance is difficult to track and an unvaccinated cat may unknowingly be admitted.	Respiratory disease and many other infectious feline diseases.
Cat is lost	Cat gets outside or wanders off outside. Cat gets loose in a natural disaster such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes and fires.	Infectious feline diseases if he is around other cats or sheltered until he is found.

\*Feline Distemper, Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV), Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV), Feline Herpes Virus (FHV), Feline Calicivirus (FCV), Feline Chlamydiosis, Rabies

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## Affordable Veterinary Services

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### *Simple Fixes for Simple Problems*

Some common problems in dogs and their solutions. I often recommend these simple treatments for adult animals who are otherwise acting normal and cannot be brought into a veterinary hospital. Dosages are at the end of the pamphlet.

1. **Vaccine Reactions/Bug bites.** Antihistamines can be given to reduce allergic reactions. Benadryl is most commonly used and can be used every 6 hours until the reaction is gone. Rarely, some cases are severe and will need to be hospitalized.
2. **Car sickness/Anxiety.** Benadryl and Dramamine can also be used for this as well. It does not work in all patients! Make sure to give it 30 minutes prior to the care ride.
3. **Diarrhea.** Withhold food from adults for 24 hours. Dogs can take Pepto Bismol and/or

Imodium AD. These medications can be used together. I do not recommend people give Imodium to Collies, Australian Shepherds, Shelties, and Border Collies because of an uncommon sedative-like reaction that can occur. If a dog's diarrhea does not improve in 1 to 2 days with the above medications a visit to the vet is needed. In young animals vomiting and diarrhea is more dangerous and needs to be addressed quickly. Make sure to bring a sample to the vet so a fecal can be done.

4. **Vomiting.** Dogs and cats can take Pepcid A/C to reduce stomach acid production. Pepto Bismol, as mentioned above, can also be used in dogs but not cats. Do not wait more than 12 hours for dogs and cats that are vomiting before seeking veterinary care, because the list of potentially serious things that can make a pet vomit is lengthy.

5. **Sneezing.** Dogs and cats can have seasonal allergies just like their owners, and will sneeze and often have a watery nasal discharge. The best over-the-counter antihistamine for dogs has been Benadryl or diphenhydramine, although recently veterinarians have begun using Claritin (loratadine) and Zyrtec (cetirizine) in dogs. In cats, chlorpheniramine seems to work the best. This is given at 2 mg, which is a half tablet, twice a day. Bear in mind, however, that upper respiratory infections, abscessed teeth, and foreign objects like a piece of grass or a foxtail, can all cause sneezing and may require veterinary attention. Cats can get "URI" or upper respiratory infection even if vaccinated. Time and fresh air usually resolves most cases but it is contagious. If there is any green mucus discharge from the nose or eyes or your pet stops eating, your pet should be seen by a veterinarian.

6. **Coughing.** Dogs can develop "kennel cough" which has very similar symptoms as a human cold. Even dogs or cats vaccinated for this can become infected. Generally, kennel cough is self-limiting and will get better with fresh air and time, but it is contagious. If your dog stops eating,

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has colored discharge from the nose, or is hot to the touch you need to seek veterinary care. Remember there are numerous other causes of cough including heartworms or heart disease!

7. **Scrapes and scratches.** You can use Neosporin on scratches on dogs and cats just as you would on yourself. Do not use hydrogen peroxide on wounds because peroxide kills the body's own white blood cells and interferes with the normal healing processes of cell division and scar tissue formation. Keep in mind that a scratch or scrape is superficial, but that puncture wounds are another matter entirely and any dog or cat with a deep puncture wound is at high risk for developing an abscess under the skin at that location unless they take antibiotics. You can clean with warm water, but iodine or chlorhexidine cleaners are best. Iodine if used should be diluted with water till it is a tea color. If it is really itchy like a hot spot then cortisone cream can be used also. Keep in mind hot spots can develop from an insect bite or fleas or from more complex medical problems.

8. **Itching.** If your pets are not on a reliable and regular flea control program, fleas are your most likely problem (even if you do not see them!!). Products I recommend: Advantage, Advantix, Frontline Plus, Certifect, Assurity, Comfortis, Trifexis Revolution, and Advantage Multi. The last 3 also get heartworms as well. If you are using a different product please contact your vet to see if the product is safe and effective. Itching in dogs can also be a result of a number of causes, but dogs will often itch during allergy season. Bathing with a mild dog shampoo will probably help to some degree. Until your dog can be seen by a veterinarian a bath may offer some needed relief. Specifically, shampoos containing oatmeal, aloe, omega 3 fatty acids or hydrocortisone are believed to reduce itching. Antihistamines, as mentioned above, may also reduce itching but tend to have limited effect in many dogs. Combining antihistamines with Omega 3 fatty acids (i.e. fish oil) can also be of benefit to mildly itchy dogs. Topical cortisone cream can also take the itch out of a localized spot.

9. **Lameness/Arthritis.** Glucosamine, chondroitin, and fish oil can be of some benefit for animals with arthritis and chronic orthopedic conditions. S-Adenosylmethionine (SAM, SAME, SAM-e) may be of benefit for osteoarthritis pain as well.

10. **Poison Ingestion.** If poison control or the product label recommends to induce vomiting, hydrogen peroxide can be given by mouth until vomiting occurs. Consult your veterinarian to see if any further treatment is needed/recommended.

*As with any medical condition, if things don't improve with simple treatment in a few days, or if things start to get worse, consult your veterinarian as soon as possible.*

**Visit [www.veterinarypartner.com](http://www.veterinarypartner.com) for more detailed information.**

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Drugs		Dog dosage	Cat dosage	How often
Pepto Bismol *		1 tab / 30 #	N/A	Every 6 hours
Imodium A/D **	2 mg	1 tab / 40 #	N/A	Every 8 hours
Pepcid A/C	10 mg tablet	1 tab / 20 #	½ tab	Every 12 hours
Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)	25 mg tablet	1 tab / 25 #	¼ tab	Every 8 hours
Dimenhydrinate (Dramamine)	50 mg tablet	1 tab / 25 #	¼ tab	Every 8 hours
Loratadine (Claritin)	10 mg tablet	1 tab / 50 #	¼ tab	Once a day
Zyrtec (Cetirizine)	10 mg tablet	1 tab / 50 #	¼ tab	Once a day
Over the counter		Frontline + / GOLD,	Frontline Gold,	Monthly

flea control		Advantage, Advantix	Advantage, Cheristan	
Neosporin		Yes	Yes	Cats occasional reaction
Fish Oil	EPA's	400 mg / 20 #	same	Once daily
Glucosamine		500 mg / 25 #	same	Divided twice a d
Chondroitin		400 mg / 25 #	same	Divided twice a d
S-Adenosyl Methionine *** (SAM, SAMe, SAM-e)		9 mg / lb	same	
Cortisone Creams		yes	yes	

\* Do not use in cats

\*\* Do not use in herding breeds (Collies, Aussies, Shelties, Border Collies, etc.)

\*\*\* Do not use in diabetic animals.