

How is Feline Immunodeficiency Virus linked to microchipping?

A vaccine is now available in New Zealand to protect against Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (feline AIDs, from the same family as humans AIDS but not transmissible to humans).

Recent data suggests that the prevalence of FIV infection in New Zealand cats is relatively high, indicating that many cats, especially those that fight frequently, should be vaccinated against infection. Vaccination entails three vaccinations, then a yearly booster. Cats must first be tested to ensure that they are not already infected with the virus.

Many animal shelters test for this virus before rehoming pets and euthanase any unclaimed animals that test positive.

At present vaccination also causes a positive FIV test result on the most commonly used tests, even though these cats cannot pass the virus on to other cats.

Current Kelburn Vet recommendations for high risk (less than seven-years-old/outside/fighting) cats are hence:

1. Test cat for FIV.
2. Microchip animals that are negative, VERY important so they will always be identified as homed and vaccinated, if they are ever lost and tested.
3. Vaccination protocol.

More in-depth data is available at the clinic.

Pooh - the miracle kidney cat

Pooh is an example of why we “treat the cat and not the test results”, as according to his kidney function tests he should be dead! When Pooh became unwell last year at the age of 10 years, lab results showed kidney enzyme values hundreds of times above the normal range. Although we went ahead with treatment, Pooh’s owner was warned that we would have to see how he responded, and that his prognosis was guarded. After a drip Pooh perked up considerably, but his lab results were still high. We found that as long as Pooh received ongoing fluid therapy (in the form of subcutaneous fluid injections) he was bright, active and ate well.

Eight months on Pooh still receives daily subcutaneous fluid injections, given by his very able owner Rachael. Pooh was not the easiest (he is one of the wriggliest!) cats to give the injections to, and at first Rachael found this a formidable task, but with perseverance and time this has now become part of an easy



Pooh still receives daily injections by his owner Rachel.

daily routine. Pooh also receives medication to reduce gastric acid, which is one of the things that can make kidney failure cats feel nauseous and off their food.

The correct diet is the most important factor, along with fluid therapy, in controlling kidney disease, and to complicate matters Pooh has food allergies that mean he reacts to many of the commercial kidney diets for cats. Pooh is fed as much of the kidney diet as possible, and we are trialing phosphate-binding medication to add to any other food he eats.

Chronic kidney failure is a common disease in old cats, and although it cannot be cured there is a lot we can do to delay the progress of disease and make cats feel more comfortable. Pooh continues to live a very active and healthy life, even though his kidney test results tell us he should be in kitty heaven - all thanks to the right diet, and daily fluid injections given by his owner at home.

Splenic Tumours (continued from page 1)

Melina in particular had suffered severe blood loss and underwent blood transfusions during and after surgery until she was stable.

Some weeks on all of our spleen-less girls are doing very well. Laboratory examination of the splenic tumours has revealed that both Woody and Melina had haemangiosarcoma of the spleen, which is a highly malignant cancer. They are receiving chemotherapy to give them



Melina is feeling just fine after her surgery.

the longest possible remission from this cancer and an improved quality of life.

Amber’s results showed a non-malignant growth, so her treatment has finished for now, though she will receive careful monitoring.

We wish these lovely dogs good health with their caring owners.



Woody at home again after her surgery - with friend Duncan.

Community profile - Chester Giles



Chester drops by for a weigh-in with Paul Giles in tow.

Many of you may have seen this handsome chap walking around Kelburn. Chester is a regular visitor at the clinic as he drops by for a chat and weigh-in when passing, usually with Paul Giles in tow as well! Paul and Marie rehomed Chester last year, and have given him a very loving home, with Chester repaying them by being a wonderful dog who has filled the very big gap left by their previous Labrador Casper. (Chester tells us he is named after Chester Williams, the speedy Springbok winger.)