

FeLV/FIV Testing

The Edmonton Humane Society has recently changed its protocol regarding FeLV/FIV testing. The following information addresses the rationale behind this decision.

Historically, all kittens and cats in our care were tested for FeLV/FIV using an in-house ELISA test. However, research has shown that less than 3% of the North American feline population test positive for either FeLV or FIV. Considering the low prevalence of these diseases, we considered whether routine testing for all cats was the best use of our resources. **Every month, thousands of dollars are spent on testing, and this does not account for the time and staffing it takes to perform these tests.**

In summary, our policy going forward for FeLV/FIV testing in cats will be as follows:

- We will test any at-risk cats, including cats with obvious fight wounds
- We will test any cats moving into group housing
- We will test cats showing signs of illness while in our care.
- Cats under 6 months of age are no longer tested.
- Healthy adult cats that are housed individually will not be tested.

We feel that reallocating these funds to providing more intensive medical care to the animals who truly need it will benefit the animals on a larger scale. In addition, the extra staff time means that each animal is able to have more time devoted to it and have any special needs addressed.