

# FIV Myths **DEBUNKED**

## Myth #1

The FIV test is reliable

**Fact:** 20% of “positive results” are test errors. The error rate for kittens is even higher. Thousands of cats and kittens are killed daily because of test errors.

## Myth #2

The FIV test shows the existence of the FIV virus.

**Fact:** It measures nothing but the antibodies, microscopic organisms that fight the virus.

## Myth #3

Kittens that test positive for FIV will *always* test positive for FIV

**Fact:** “infected mothers rarely if ever, pass the infection to their kittens,” Dr. Niels C Peterson, the first to isolate the FIV in 1986 and Director, Center for Companion Animal Health, UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine



**Fact:** “kittens born to FIV positive mothers are at low risk for infection, although they may initially test positive due to the presence of maternal antibodies” “Kittens should be re-tested at 6-8 months as most will then test negative because the maternal antibodies will have seroconverted” –Korel Shelter Medicine Program, UC Davis Veterinary Medicine

## Myth #4

Cat who have the virus will develop the disease and die from it

**Fact:** 90% of cats who actually have the actual FIV virus “will lead completely normal lives” and die from the same causes that nay other cat might die from.

## Myth #5

FIV+ Cats will lead short, miserable lives.

**Fact:** FIV + Cats can and DO live long, healthy lives, if given a chance. Most live as long as their indoor counterparts, and much longer than outdoor cats. Many live well into old age without symptoms

## Myth #5

The FIV virus is a threat to other animals because it can be transmitted by casual contact.

**Fact:** Modern medical research as well as mounting empirical evidence indicates that transmission requires serious physical interaction. “Deep bite wounds are by far, the primary mode of the virus’ transmission”.

**Fact:** The virus can only live a few seconds outside of the body, so sharing food and water bowls is not an issue.

Fiv + cats in multiple cats homes do not appear to spread the disease, as long as parties are not combative. FIV Cat Rescue has had a group of 16 mixed cats (PIV positive and negative) living together for 6 years. N FIV-cat has ever become FIV

