



FELINE CALICIVIRUS

ABOUT THE DISEASE

Feline Calicivirus (FCV) is a common and highly contagious viral disease typically seen in multiple-cat environments or where overcrowding exists. **FCV** is acquired mainly through oral transmission of fluids (saliva, respiratory discharge, etc.).

FCV causes upper respiratory signs (sneezing, nasal discharge, etc.), oral ulcerative lesions, and less commonly arthritis. All ages and genders are affected, but susceptibility for typical upper respiratory infection is highest in kittens. Recovered feline patients remain as lifelong carriers but may not always exhibit clinical signs.

Co-infection with other respiratory diseases (viruses, bacteria, etc.) will worsen the signs attributed to **FCV**.

A vaccine for **FCV** exists and is included in the routine annual combination vaccine given to feline patients. This combination vaccine is abbreviated the FVRCP vaccine which is an abbreviation for feline viral rhinotracheitis/**calicivirus**/panleukopenia virus/chlamydia. The most effective vaccination series starts as a kitten and is carried through adulthood.

OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

A diagnosis is most often made following a physical examination performed by a veterinarian, combined with clinical signs and symptoms.

An oral-nasal swab can be taken from patients and sent off for specific viral testing. More often, patients will have a combination respiratory panel performed instead of single viral testing.

TREATMENT

There are no specific treatments for upper respiratory viral infections. Treatment is aimed at controlling clinical signs, treating secondary bacterial infection, and preventing spread to other feline patients.

Many patients have self-limiting symptoms that will resolve without treatment.

Antibiotics are only beneficial if secondary bacterial infections are suspected.

Oral ulcers and arthritis usually resolve without complication.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Antibiotics will not treat any viral infection.
- Vaccinate kittens and adults on a regular schedule to minimize risk of infection.
- Maintain a clean environment including food bowls in multiple-cat households and settings to reduce exposure.
 - **FCV** is stable and resistant to many disinfectants, except bleach.