




# Top 20 Feline Conditions Part 1



 This list of the top 20 feline conditions is the *purrfect* preparation for boards success!

## 1. Feline leukemia virus (FeLV)

- **Classic case:**
  - Kitten or young adult, free-roaming, usually male
  - "Ain't Doin' Right" (ADR)
  - +/- Abdominal or thoracic masses
- **Dx:**
  - CBC: Leukopenia, neutropenia
  - Radiography: Thorax and abdomen for FeLV-associated lymphosarcoma
  - Screen: Serum ELISA
  - Confirmation: IFA
- **Tx:**
  - Supportive: Antibiotics, nutritional support, fluids
  - Stress-free environment
  - Separate from FeLV-negative cats
- **Pearls:**
  - Prognosis: Fair to poor
  - Transmission: Saliva exchange
  - Vaccinate kittens against FeLV; continue vaccinations if high risk
  - IFA-positive cats persistently infected for life



*FeLV-associated lymphosarcoma in the mesentery at the ileocolic junction*

## 2. Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV)

- **Classic case:**
  - Mature cat, usually intact male, lives outdoors, previous bite wounds
  - Gingivitis, stomatitis
  - ADR, fever, anorexia, lethargy
- **Dx:**
  - CBC: Anemia, leukopenia (esp. neutropenia), thrombocytopenia
  - Screen: Serum ELISA (false positive if vaccinated)
  - Confirmation: Western blot (false positive if vaccinated)
- **Tx:**

- Supportive: Antibiotics, fluids, nutritional support
- Dental care
- **Pearls:**
  - Prognosis: Good to excellent, most do well for years
  - Some cats develop AIDS-like disease with profound neutropenia
  - Test before FIV vaccination

### 3. Feline hyperthyroidism

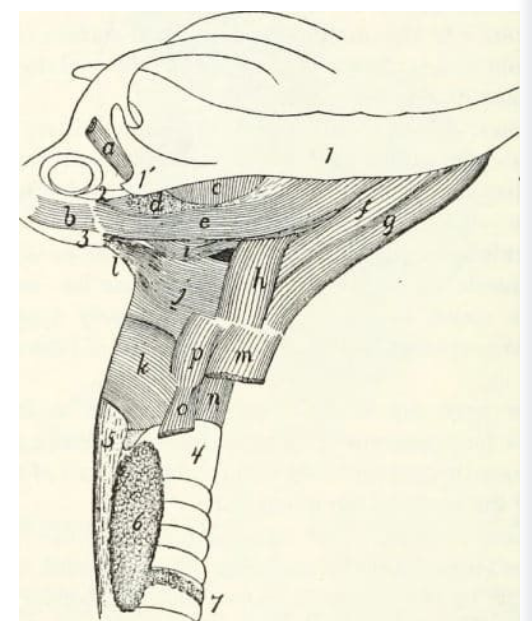
- **Classic case:**
  - Middle-aged or older cat
  - Weight loss with increased appetite
  - Vomiting, diarrhea
  - Murmur, tachycardia, arrhythmia
  - "Yowling" at night
  - Palpable thyroid nodules
- **Dx:**
  - Screen: Total T4 (TT4) – may be high-normal with concurrent disease (euthyroid sick syndrome)
  - Thyroid scintigraphy
  - Echocardiogram and blood pressure
- **Tx:**
  - Iodine 131 (I-131)
    - Gold standard
    - Most cases cured with ONE dose
  - Anti-thyroid medication (methimazole, felimazole, tapazole)
    - Controls, but does not cure, many side effects
  - Thyroidectomy: Risk of accidental parathyroid removal and life-threatening hypocalcemia
  - Diet: Iodine restriction
- **Pearls:**
  - Prognosis: Fair to excellent
  - Adenomatous hyperplasia most common, neoplasia uncommon
  - Less common presentation is "apathetic hyperthyroid": Anorexia, lethargy, etc.
- Click here to see a [thyroid nodule](#) in a cat from the Merck Vet Manual

### 4. Hepatic lipidosis

- **Classic case:**
  - Obese cat with several-day history of anorexia
  - Weight loss, jaundice
  - Ptyalism when hepatic encephalopathy (HE) present
- **Dx:**
  - Serum biochemistry: ALP higher than ALT, total bilirubin increased, normal GGT (helps differentiate from other hepatobiliary diseases)
  - Coagulopathies
  - Abdominal ultrasound
  - Liver fine-needle aspirate (FNA) or biopsy
- **Tx:**
  - Nutritional support is key
    - Esophagostomy tube
    - High-quality, high-protein diet (unless HE present)



FIV-positive, FeLV-negative ELISA test



Thyroid gland (6)



Nutritional support with an esophageal feeding tube is often necessary to treat hepatic lipidosis

- Avoid glucocorticoids
- If HE: Lactulose retention enemas
- **Pearls:**
  - Prognosis: Fair to excellent
  - Treat hyporexic and anorexic cats promptly and aggressively

## 5. Chronic renal disease

- **Classic case:**
  - Senior or geriatric cat
  - Polyuria and polydipsia
  - Weight loss, vomiting
  - Lethargy, hyporexia/anorexia
  - Small, lumpy, bumpy kidneys
- **Dx:**
  - Azotemia and hyperphosphatemia
  - +/- Hypokalemia and anemia
  - Dilute or isosthenuric urine
  - High blood pressure
  - Urine protein:creatinine ratio > 0.4
  - Abdominal ultrasonography
- **Tx:**
  - Supportive care: Appetite stimulants, anti-emetics, H<sub>2</sub>-blockers, fluids, K<sup>+</sup> supplements, anti-hypertensive medication, phosphorus binders
  - Nutrition: Renal prescription diets
- **Pearls:**
  - Prognosis: Poor to good, depending on severity and concurrent illnesses



*Subcutaneous fluids administered at home to a cat with chronic renal disease*

Images courtesy of Stephanb ([queen with litter](#)), Dr. Uwe Gille ([mesenteric lymphosarcoma](#), [subcutaneous fluids](#)), [Kalumet](#) (FIV/FelV ELISA), [Anatomy of the Cat](#) (thyroid anatomy), [AGarren](#) (cat with feeding tube), and [Art man](#) (cat nose).

Feline