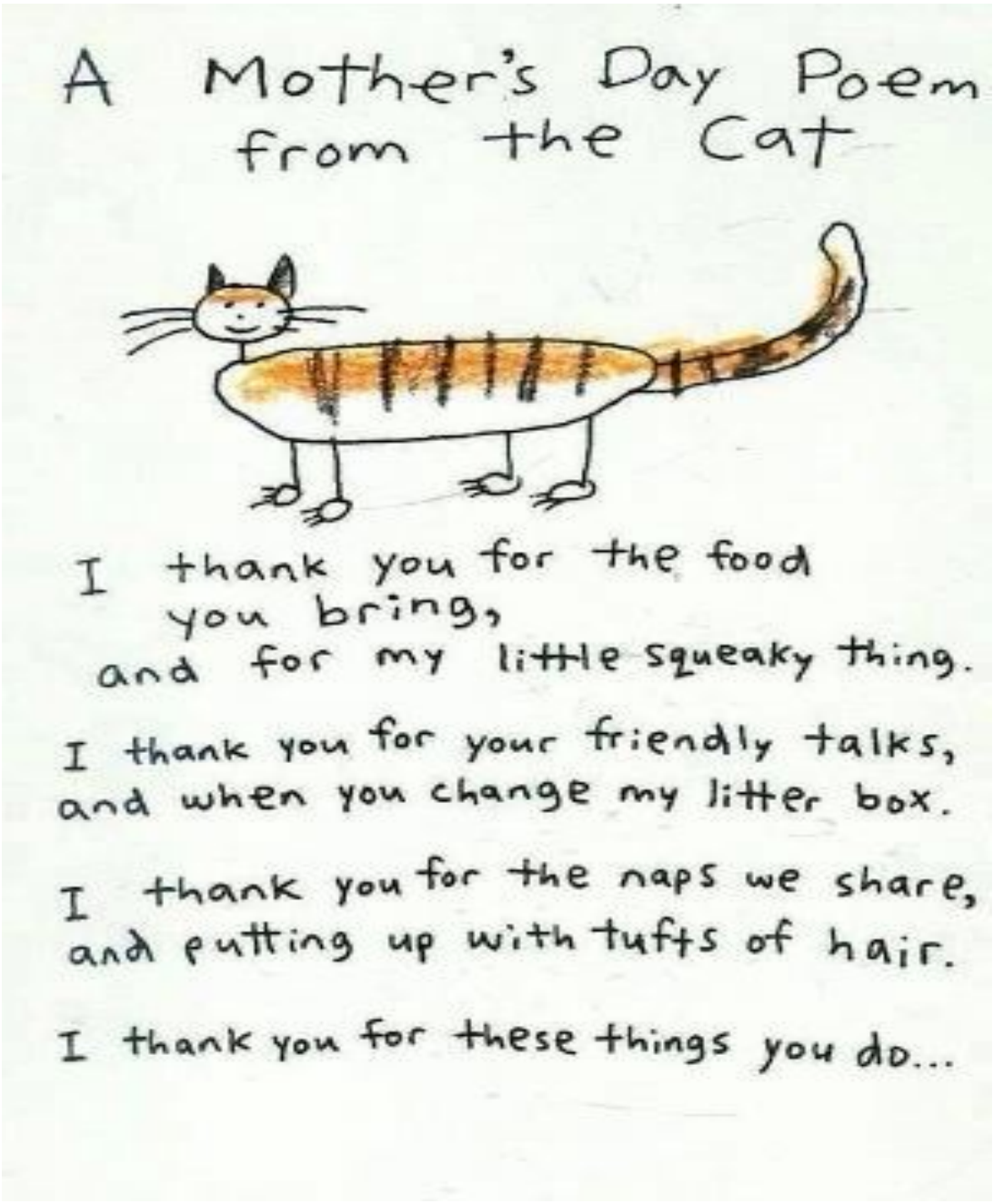
Rex and Burmese Cat Fancier of South Australia Inc. Newsletter

MAY 2013



I am sure we have all seen pictures of Tard "the grumpy cat". Did you know that Tard has dwafism!
Thus explains her disfigured sad face.
I think she is very cute and a very sweet cat.

Tard and Pokey are Snowshoe Siamese.

" Unfortunately, this one has some very bad genetic de-fects, The likely cause is inbreeding due to the small

Continued Page 4

Show Results

Leewood Silken Solitaire

Best Group 3 Kitten

In 2 rings at the Festival City Show

May	19	Adelaide Cat Club		DOC / PDF	8531 2085	GCSA
	26	Persian Breeders Cat Club			8387 2850	FASA
	9	ACF National Show in Adelaide	Fiona Rebecca	SCHEDULE & Entry Form	8321 9255 0434 608	GCSA/ACF
	23	Tandanya Cat Club - CANCELLED			8449 5880	
	30	FASA Annual Show			0401 354 052	
July	14	Longhair Cat Club, including GCGA Finals			8276 1938	

Cat Fanciers Show 5th May 2013

Rubuss Hot Toddy - Best Selkirk Shorthair Neuter and 3rd in Group

Rebuss Can't Buy Me Love - Best Longhair Neuter and 1st best in group and 4th Best

Taking it easy after Their big wins!

The **Munchkin** is a relatively new breed of cat characterized by its very short legs, which is caused by a naturally occurring genetic mutation. Named after the short-statured characters from Wizard of Oz, the breed was developed in the 1980s in the United States. Much controversy erupted over the breed when it was recognized by The International Cat Association in 1995 with critics voicing concern over potential health and mobility issues.Short-legged cats have been documented a number of times around the world since the 1940s. A British veterinary report in 1944 noted four generations of healthy short-legged cats which were similar to normal cats except for the length of the legs. This line disappeared during the Second World War but other short-legged cats were spotted in Russia during 1956 and the United States in the 1970s. In Russia the cat earned the nickname "Stalingrad Kangaroo cat".

In 1983 Sandra Hochenedel, a music teacher in Louisiana, found 2 pregnant cats who had been chased by a bulldog under a truck. She kept one of the cats and named her Blackberry and half of her kittens were born short-legged. Hochenedel gave a short-legged male kitten from one of Blackberry's litters to a friend, Kay LaFrance, and she named the kitten Toulouse. It is from Blackberry and Toulouse that today's Munchkin breed is descended.

Toulouse was an unneutered cat with outdoor access and after some time a population of stray short-legged cats started to form. Thinking that they might have a new breed, Hochenedel and LaFrance contacted Dr. Solveig Pflueger, a show judge, chairperson of The International Cat Association's(TICA) genetics committee and advisor to the Board of Directors. Together with Dr David Biller, Head of Radiology at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University, Pflueger conducted studies on the cats and determined that the short-legged trait has an autosomal dominant mode of inheritance and that the cats did not appear to have any spinal problems associated with those found in short-legged dog breeds such as the Corgi and Dachshund.

The Munchkin was first introduced to the general public in 1991 via a national network televised cat show held by The International Cat Association (TICA) in Madison Square Garden. Critics predicted that the breed would develop back, hip and leg problems similar to those that plague some Dachshunds. Amidst much controversy, TICA accepted the Munchkin into

Apart from TICA, registries that recognize the breed includes The American Association of Cat Enthusiasts (AACE), The United Feline Organization (UFO), the Southern Africa Cat Council, and the Waratah National Cat Alliance in Australia. here is controversy among breeders of pedigree cats as to what genetic mutations are abnormal and potentially disadvantageous to the cat. Several cat registries do not recognize the Munchkin: Fédération Internationale Féline, which refuses to recognise what they consider a breed based on a "genetic disease", achondroplasia. .The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy likewise refuses to recognise the breed, considering this breed and others like it to be "unacceptable" because they are based on an "abnormal structure or development". The breed is also not recognized by the Cat Fanciers' Association. The Australian Capital Territory (a territory of Australia) government consider the munchkin breed to be "malformed animals" and the deliberate breeding of them "unacceptable" because of the "genetic health problems associated with such breeding". Owners and Breeders of munchkins declare them to be "a sound breed" that is "ideal" for small homes and not particularly susceptible to health problems.

Characteristics

The Munchkin is generally described as a sweet-natured, playful, people-oriented, outgoing and intelligent cat which responds well to being handled. The shortness of their legs does not seem to interfere with their running and leaping abilities.

The Munchkin has similar characteristics to normal domestic cats, due to their frequent use as outcrosses. It is a small to medium sized cat with a moderate body type and medium-plush coat. Male Munchkins typically weigh between 6 to 9 pounds (3–4 kg) and are usually larger than female Munchkins, which typically weigh between 4 to 8 pounds. The hind legs can be slightly longer than the front which creates a slight rise from the shoulder to the rump. The legs of the Munchkin may be slightly bowed, although excessive bowing is a disqualification in the show ring. Cow-hocked legs are also penalized.

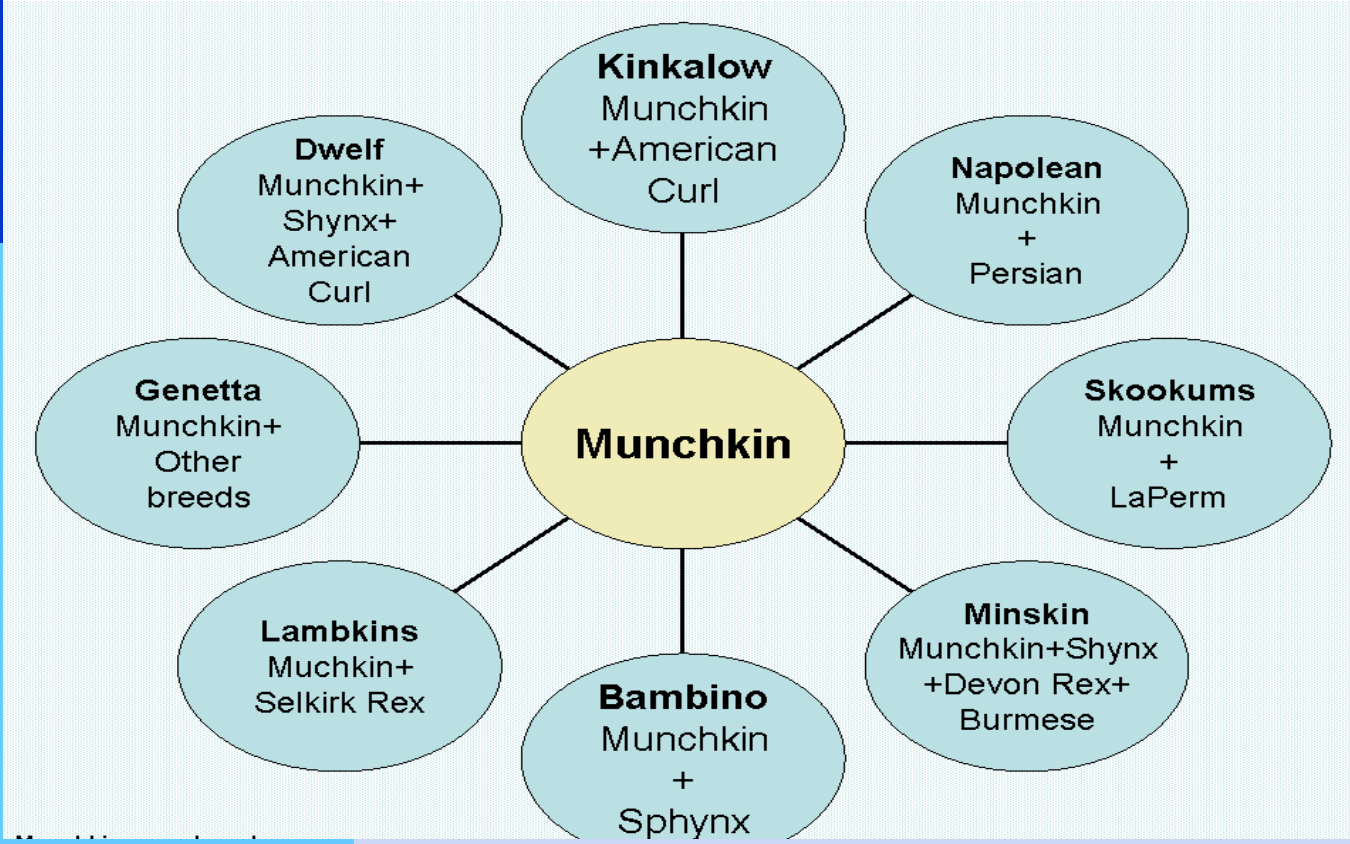
The Munchkin comes in all coat colors and patterns. It also comes in a long-haired variety, which is shown in a separate Munchkin Longhair category. The short-haired variety has a medium-plush coat while the long-haired has a semi-long silky coat. TICA rules for outcrossing allows the use of any domestic cat that does not already belong to a recognized breed. Similarity to other breeds is grounds for disqualification. Non-standard Munchkins are not allowed to be shown

Health

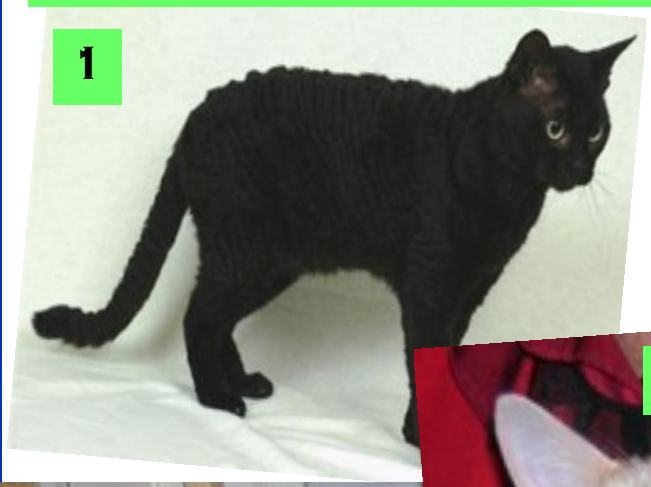
Early speculations that the Munchkin will develop spinal problems commonly seen in short-legged dog breeds did not materialize. In 1995 several Breeders had their oldest Munchkins X-rayed and examined for signs of joint or bone problems and no problems were found.

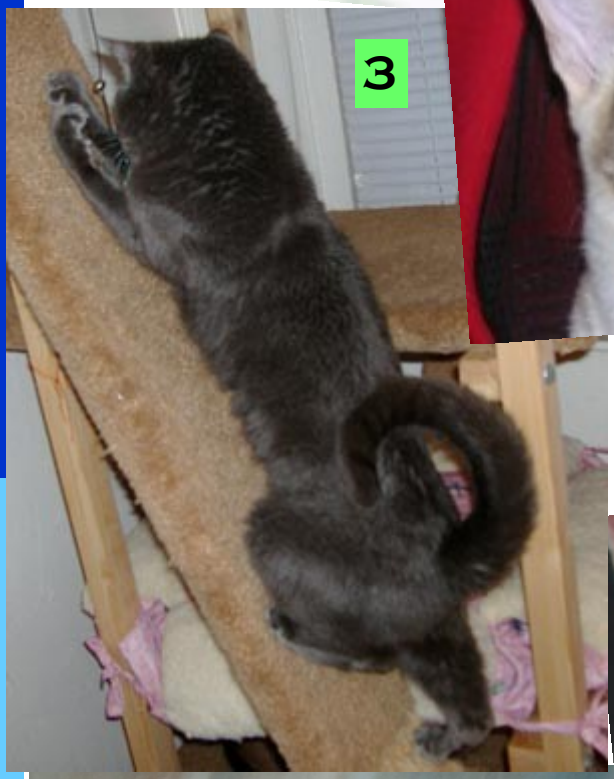
Two rare problems documented in the breed are lordosis (excessive curvature of the spine) and pectus excavatum (hollowed chest), although actual prevalence is not known. These conditions can appear in other breeds and some breeders have denied that it is a problem for the Munchkin. Small litter sizes when two munchkin cats are crossed indicate that embryos that are homozygous for the munchkin gene are non-viable.

Although the genetic mutation causing the short-legged trait in Munchkins has been referred to as achondroplasia, it has not been proven that the trait is due to a gene at the same locus as causing achondroplasia in humans. Furthermore, while achondroplasia is typically associated with an enlarged head as well as short legs, this combination of features is not seen in Munchkin cats. The condition has sometimes been referred to as hypochondroplasia instead.



GUESS WHAT BREEDS WE ARE?





CUTTING YOUR CATS NAILS

It is recommended you get a cat used to having it's feet handled from an early age. This can be done by gently massaging your cat's feet. Some of my cats are less than thrilled at having their claws trimmed.

In such a case I recommend you only trim a couple of claws per session. Never grab the paw try and always handle the cat gently, if you grab they tend to resent it. Needle to say do not scruff them, this will really upset them. If you have a cat that hates having nails cut there are ways to cope. You can try wrapping them tightly in a towel and cutting one paw at a time. Its really a judgment call you could always ask a friendly vet nurse to assist you!

Cat Bag
These bags can assist if you cat is happy to get in! There are zippers so you can do one paw at a time!

Hold the cat's paw in your hand with your fingers on the underside & your thumb on the top.
Gently apply a forward pressure to one toe. This causes the claw to come out of the sheath, which makes it easier to see to cut.

Notice how in the middle of the claw is pink, this is the quick & it contains blood & nerves. This is best if you do not cut the quick as it will cause bleeding and is uncomfortable. If you do accidentally cut this, you can apply pressure or even soap to the claw to stop the bleeding. The claw should stop bleeding in about 5 minutes. The cat wont bleed to death if you cut a nail to short.

Cat Claw - Showing Quick

There are several kinds of nail clippers you can use. I use regular nail clippers for humans, but you can also purchase clippers specifically for cat's claws, these should be available from your vet or pet supply shop. Nail clippers should be very sharp as blunt ones will crush the nail, not cut it.

Finished nail !
Don't forget the dew claw on both front paws!

Clipping cat's claw

Aim to trim between the tip of the claw & the quick.

Feline Leukemia Virus

What is feline leukemia virus?

Feline leukemia virus (FeLV), a retrovirus, so named because of the way it behaves within infected cells. All retroviruses, including feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), produce an enzyme, reverse transcriptase, which permits them to insert copies of their own genetic material into that of the cells they have infected. Although related, FeLV and FIV differ in many ways, including their shape: FeLV is more circular while FIV is elongated. The two viruses are also quite different genetically, and their protein consituents are dissimlar in size and composition. Although many of the diseases caused by FeLV and FIV are similar, the specific ways in which they are caused differs.

How common is the infection?

FeLV-infected cats are found worldwide, but the prevalence of infection varies greatly depending on their age, health, environment, and lifestyle. In the United States, approximately 2 to 3% of all cats are infected with FeLV. Rates rise significantly—13% or more—in cats that are ill, very young, or otherwise at high risk of infection.

How is FeLV spread?

Cats persistently infected with FeLV serve as sources of infection. Virus is shed in very high quantities in saliva and nasal secretions, but also in urine, faeces, and milk from infected cats. Cat-to-cat transfer of virus may occur from a bite wound, during mutual grooming, and (though rarely) through the shared use of litter boxes and feeding dishes. Transmission can also take place from an infected mother cat to her kittens, either before they are born or while they are nursing. FeLV doesn't survive long outside a cat's body—probably less than a few hours under normal household conditions.

What cats are at greatest risk of infection?

Cats at greatest risk of infection are those that may be exposed to infected cats, either via prolonged close contact or through bite wounds. Such cats include:

- Cats living with infected cats or with cats of unknown infection status
- Cats allowed outdoors unsupervised, where they may be bitten by an infected cat
- Kittens born to infected mothers

Kittens are much more susceptible to infection than are adult cats, and therefore are at the greatest risk of infection if exposed. But accompanying their progression to maturity is an increasing resistance to FeLV infection. For example, the degree of virus exposure sufficient to infect 100% of young kittens will infect only 30% or fewer adults. Nonetheless, even healthy adult cats can become infected if sufficiently exposed.

What does FeLV do to a cat?

Feline leukemia virus adversely affects the cat's body in many ways. It is the most common cause of cancer in cats, it may cause various blood disorders, and it may lead to a state of immune deficiency that hinders the cat's ability to protect itself against other infections. The same bacteria, viruses, protozoa, and fungi that may be found in the everyday environment—where they usually do not affect healthy animals—can cause severe illness in those with weakened immune systems. These secondary infections are responsible for many of the diseases associated with FeLV.

What are the signs of disease caused by FeLV?

During the early stages of infection, it is common for cats to exhibit no signs of disease at all. However, over time—weeks, months, or even years—the cat's health may progressively deteriorate or be characterized by recurrent illness interspersed with periods of relative health. Signs can include:

- Loss of appetite
- Slow but progressive weight loss, followed by severe wasting late in the disease process
- Poor coat condition

Continued.....

- Enlarged lymph nodes
- Persistent fever
- Pale gums and other mucus membranes
- Inflammation of the gums (gingivitis) and mouth (stomatitis)
- Infections of the skin, urinary bladder, and upper respiratory tract
- Persistent diarrhoea
- Seizures, behaviour changes, and other neurological disorders
- A variety of eye conditions
- In unspayed female cats, abortion of kittens or other reproductive failures

I understand there are two stages of FeLV infection. What are they?

FeLV is present in the blood (a condition called viremia) during two different stages of infection:

- **Primary viremia**, an early stage of virus infection. During this stage some cats are able to mount an effective immune response, eliminate the virus from the bloodstream, and halt progression to the secondary viremia stage.
- **Secondary viremia**, a later stage characterized by persistent infection of the bone marrow and other tissue. If FeLV infection progresses to this stage it has passed a point of no return: the overwhelming majority of cats with secondary viremia will be infected for the remainder of their lives.

How is infection diagnosed?

Two types of FeLV blood tests are in common use. Both detect a protein component of the virus as it circulates in the bloodstream.

- **ELISA** (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) and similar tests can be performed in your veterinarian's office. ELISA-type tests detect both primary and secondary stages of viremia.
- **IFA** (indirect immunofluorescent antibody assay) tests must be sent out to a diagnostic laboratory. IFA tests detect secondary viremia only, so the majority of positive-testing cats remain infected for life.

Each testing method has strengths and weaknesses. Your veterinarian will likely suggest an ELISA-type test first, but in some cases, both tests must be performed—and perhaps repeated—to clarify a cat's true infection status.

How can I keep my cat from becoming infected?

The only sure way to protect cats is to prevent their exposure to FeLV-infected cats.

- Keep cats indoors, away from potentially infected cats that might bite them. If you do allow your cats outdoor access, provide supervision or place them in a secure enclosure to prevent wandering and fighting.
- Adopt only infection-free cats into households with uninfected cats.
- House infection-free cats separately from infected cats, and don't allow infected cats to share food and water bowls or litter boxes with uninfected cats.
- Consider FeLV vaccination of uninfected cats. (FeLV vaccination of infected cats is not beneficial.) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of vaccination with your veterinarian. FeLV vaccines are widely available, but since not all vaccinated cats will be protected, preventing exposure remains important even for vaccinated pets. FeLV vaccines will not cause cats to receive false positive results on ELISA, IFA, or any other available FeLV tests.

I just discovered that one of my cats has FeLV, yet I have other cats as well. What should I do?

Unfortunately, many FeLV-infected cats are not diagnosed until after they have lived with other cats. In such cases, all other cats in the household should be tested for FeLV. Ideally, infected and non-infected cats should then be separated to eliminate the potential for FeLV transmission.

How should FeLV-infected cats be managed?

- Confine FeLV-infected cats indoors to reduce their exposure to other infectious agents carried by animals, and to prevent the spread of infection to other cats in the neighbourhood.
- Spay or neuter FeLV-infected cats.
- Feed nutritionally complete and balanced diets.
- Avoid uncooked food, such as raw meat and eggs, and unpasteurized dairy products because the risk of food-borne bacterial and parasitic infections is much higher in immunosuppressed cats.
- Schedule wellness visits with your veterinarian at least once every six months. Although a detailed physical examination of all body systems should be performed, your veterinarian should pay special attention to the health of the gums, eyes, skin, and lymph nodes. A complete blood count, serum biochemical analysis, and a urine analysis should be performed at every examination. Additionally, your cat's weight should be accurately measured and recorded, as weight loss is often the first sign of deterioration.
- Closely monitor the health and behavior of your FeLV-infected cat. Alert your veterinarian to any changes in your cat's health immediately.
- There is no scientific evidence that alternative, immunomodulator, or antiviral medications have any positive benefits on the health or longevity of healthy infected cats.

How long can I expect my FeLV-infected cat to live?

It is impossible to accurately predict the life expectancy of a cat infected with FeLV. With appropriate care and under ideal conditions, infected cats can remain in apparent good health for many months, although most succumb to a FeLV-related disease within two or three years after becoming infected. If your cat has already experienced one or more severe illnesses as a result of FeLV infection, or if persistent fever, weight loss, or cancer is present, a much shorter survival time can be expected.

My FeLV-infected cat died recently after a long illness. How should I clean my home before bringing in a new cat?

Feline leukemia virus will not survive outside the cat for more than a few hours in most environments. However, FeLV-infected cats are frequently infected with other hardier infectious agents, and these may pose some threat to a newcomer. Thoroughly clean and disinfect or replace food and water dishes, bedding, litter pans and toys. A dilute solution of household bleach (4 ounces of bleach in a gallon of water) makes an excellent disinfectant. Vacuum carpets and mop floors. Any new cats or kittens should be properly vaccinated before entering the household.

Can people become infected with FeLV?

Epidemiological and laboratory studies have failed to provide evidence that FeLV can be transmitted from infected cats to humans. Regardless, FeLV-infected cats may carry other diseases. At greatest risk of infection are elderly or immunosuppressed people (e.g., those with AIDS, or receiving immunosuppressive medications such as chemotherapy), infants, and unborn children. It is recommended that pregnant women, people with suppressed immune systems, the very young, and the very old avoid contact with FeLV-infected cats.

Burmese Interesting Issue

For the past thirty years, there has been controversy over the appearance of the breed, which can now be divided into two camps. American breeders prefer the "contemporary Burmese" ("American Burmese") which has shorter noses and rounder skulls. The "traditional Burmese" (or "British Burmese") was declassed by the Cat Fanciers' Association in the 1980s. England's Governing Council of the Cat Fancy took the opposite approach and banned the registration of all Burmese imported from America in order to preserve the "traditional" bloodlines.

The controversy revolves around the fact that "contemporary Burmese" sometimes carry alleles for the "Head Fault", a lethal head defect. The head fault rarely occurs with "traditional Burmese". Its widespread presence in the American lineages goes back to a cat named *Good Fortune Fortunatas*, a fine example of the "contemporary" body/head type, although the defect was present in Burmese cats before Fortunatas.[This individual was extensively mated to Burmese cats in the USA, and today's show-type American Burmese cats can usually trace their lineage back to it.

"Contemporary Burmese" Breeders have continued with their stock because defective kittens are stillborn or euthanized soon after birth, and because sterilization of all possible head fault carriers would greatly reduce the North American Burmese gene pool. While the average, non-breeding pet owner does not ever have to deal with the head fault, it is hoped that the "head fault" allele will eventually be eliminated by a genetic test, and then by a period of controlled breeding.

Leslie A. Lyons, Ph.D. from University of California, Davis led the research to locate the recessive gene mutation that causes the head fault. Elimination of the defective gene from the gene pool is currently ongoing. In order to preserve diversity of blood lines some carriers of the gene are mated to non-carriers in order to produce further non-carriers. This breeding model is preferable to the immediate removal of all carriers from the gene pool because it helps to protect against a reduction in genetic diversity.

Diseases of the Burmese Cat

The incidence of flat-chested kitten syndrome was at one time believed to be particularly prevalent in the Burmese breed, but has been shown with extensive data-gathering since 1995 about the condition to be present in all breeds. Possibly the apparent prevalence in the Burmese is most likely due to better communication between breeders and reporting of the condition, as well as the naturally more barrel-shaped chest of this particular genotype. A study funded by the UK Burmese Cat Club in 1980 was inconclusive when seeking causes.

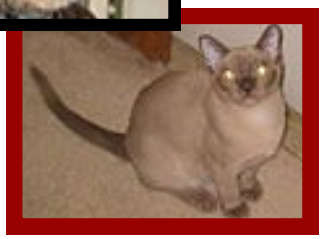
Certain UK bloodlines suffer from an acute teething disorder in young kittens, where the eruption of the second teeth causes extreme discomfort and the young cat tears at its face to try to alleviate the pain. Veterinary intervention is not useful, since it is the eruption of the new teeth in the jaw that causes the problem; these cannot be removed until they have erupted, by which time the problem

ceases. Owners have coped by bandaging the paws of the cat and carrying it around almost constantly, sometimes for as long as 2 weeks (in extreme cases). Apart from scarring caused by the self-mutilation, the cat seems to recover completely. Some kittens only experience the problem for a few hours.

Hypokalaemia, a genetic disease, which is characterised by low serum potassium levels, is also known in the UK Burmese and can similarly be traced to certain bloodlines. The gene is recessive, and both parents must carry it for the kittens to develop the problem. A carrier mated to a non-carrier may pass the problem on unnoticed for several generations. Clinical signs include skeletal muscle weakness, which is often episodic in nature and either affects the whole cat or is localised to the neck muscles. As a consequence the cat can have difficulty in walking and holding their head correctly. Hypokalaemic cats can usually lead a normal life if they get the correct, highly palatable, potassium supplement. Onset of symptoms often occurs around puberty and many may never experience another attack. A DNA test is now available to identify cats affected by or carrying this recessive gene, and breeders are using the test to carefully eliminate the gene from the breed's gene pool.

The Burmese is predisposed to Diabetes mellitus although US lines do not seem to have this predisposition.[1]

Choco-late British Burmese



Blue American Male Burmese

Platinum American Burmese Female Kitten

Committee Members

Rex and Burmese of Cat Fanciers of South Australia Inc.

President :
Jenny Simmons contact: astracan85@yahoo.com.au 0447 660 148

Vice President :
Michelle Delaine contact: leewoodburmese@y7mail.com 0437 191 295

Treasurer:
Sue Ashby contact: desueburmese@icloud.com 0409 677 610

Secretary:
Julie Lawrence contact : juliebluejordie@hotmail.com 0434 499571

Committee Members:
Lauren Westbrook, contact: adabelbengals@gmail.com 0415 553 778
Anne Kirkland, contact: anne@charlburycats.com 8240 4447
Pam Denham, contact: bobdenham@hotmail.com 8285 9995
Website Officer:
Cary Plessnig, Contact: plessnig@internode.on.net 0431 670 009
Kitten Enquiry Officer
(non Breeder): Pam Denham

Facebook Page!

https://www.facebook.com/RexandBurmeseCats?

Please come and have a look at the wed site and help us make it more in- teresting by sending in pictures and stories!

http://rex-fanciers.weebly.com/

Newsletter
Editor
Julie Lawrence
juliebluejordie@hotmail.com

Results of the votes for the logo!

This fantastic logo has been designed by the very talented Holly. This logo was designed at no cost to our club so many, many thanks to Holly for donating her art work. The members of our club have voted and the results were New Logo 14, Old Logo 1, Abstained votes 1. 2 members have not voted.