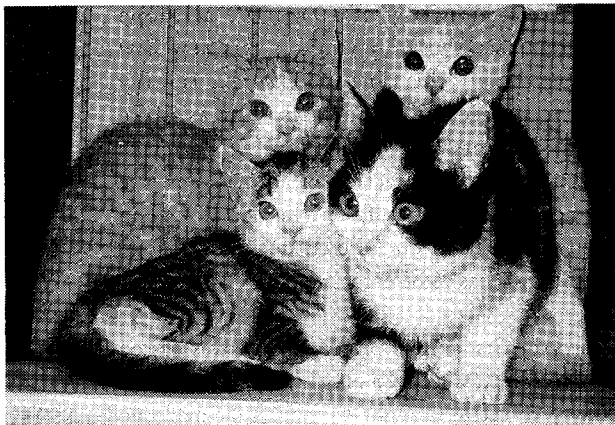


FIV（猫免疫不全ウイルス感染症）と 避妊・去勢手術の因果な関係

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△ シムシと暑い夏が過ぎ、秋の気配が近づいてきましたが、猫にとっても忙しい季節がやって参りました。この時期は彼らの恋のシーズンでもあります。そしてその為自分のテリトリー主張の為のケンカのシーズンでもあるのです。皆さん、ケンカで大ケガをされる前にも、望まれずに生まれてくる仔猫達をこれ以上増やさない為にも、去勢手術や避妊手術は是非受けて下さい。さて、我家に愛猫ピーチがやってきて早5ヶ月目というところでしょうか。この5ヶ月飼った主孝行な彼女は病気1つせず、どんどんたくましくなりつつあります。そんな彼女にも持病があります。FIV猫免疫不全ウイルス感染症、いわゆる猫エイズキャリアなのです。猫エイズは（ヒトエイズ）とは異なるウイルスですので人間には感染しません。しかし、人間のエイズと同様、免疫力を落としてしまう不治の病気なのです。彼女の場合、既に幼い時に陽性の判定がついていたことから、一般的な外で起きるようなケンカによる咬傷からの感染ではなく、母猫に仕つけられていた時点で感染したのかも知れません。母猫は時として強く仔猫を咬みますし、彼女の母はFIV陽性なので……。FIVは胎盤感染はしない疾患だとありますから彼女がFIVキャリアになってしまったのは不運としかいい様がありません。（その証拠に同腹の2頭はFIV陰性でした。）しかし言っても始まりません。飼い主の私は、もし発症したら抵抗力を著しく落とすであろう彼女の為に予防策を張らねばなりません。口内炎になりやすいのだから歯石をなるべくつけないようドライフードを、膀胱炎も油断できないのであるべく細菌が住みにくい低pHの尿を作る食餌を、子宮に病気を持ったり、第2のピーチを作らない為に避妊手術を、彼女が元気であるうちに、具合が悪くってからできるだけ環境変化をおこさないよう（ストレスはFIVには最大の敵なので）考えてみました。同じ年のルームメイトは欲しいけれど、健康な猫だとピーチがじゃれて咬んでもFIVになるかもしれないし（FIVにはワクチンはありません。）かといってFIV陽性の猫をもう一頭お友達に迎えて数年後、2頭の猫達が同時に発病した時、飼い主の私は充分目が届くかしら？不安だな……。と思い、今のところ愛しのピーチは寂しく一人娘しております。私に自信がいたらもう1頭飼うもよし、ピーチが年をとり、咬んだりひっかいたり、相手に傷をおわせ感染させない状況ができてから、健康な子を飼うもよし、などと今現在は考えています。今は元気に飛び跳ねている彼女を見て、もし発症してあちこちにガタがきてしまう時の事を考えると、正直とても哀しい思いもしますし、何もしていないでどうしてFIVにともいます。きっとFIVの猫を飼っている皆さん、同じ想いでおられるだろうなと思います。でもウイルスの特性上、ワクチンは完成することはありません。それならばやはり、飼い主さんに頑張ってもらうしかありません。知らない所でケンカをして感染したり、させたり、また、感染しているのに赤ちゃんを育てたりしないよう、去勢手術や避妊手術を受け、外で危険に合わないよう室内飼育をしてあげて下さい。



FIV and Neutering as Preventive Medicine

by Higashida Asako
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As the hot, humid summer winds down and the first signs of autumn appear, cats start to shake off their lassitude and get ready for courtship. This means that they will be getting involved in fights to defend their own territory, and in order to prevent the terrible injuries they may receive in such fights, and also to stop more unwanted kittens from being born, we strongly recommend neutering your cat before the "season of love" gets in full swing.

It has already been five months since our cat Peach joined our family, and throughout that time she has been strong and lively. And yet Peach has the feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), and as such is a carrier of feline AIDS. FIV is a different virus from HIV, which causes AIDS in people, and thus is not communicable to human beings. Like HIV, however, it is incurable and causes a steady decline in the immune system. As Peach tested positive for FIV as a kitten, we believe she got it from her mother and not through the usual route of being bitten in a fight with another cat. Cats sometimes bite their kittens severely

when disciplining them, and Peach's mother is FIV-positive. As FIV is not transmitted to kittens inside the womb, we can only say Peach was very unlucky — two of her brothers and sisters are FIV-negative. But that is now beside the point. As her owner, I must do whatever I can to prevent her coming down with full-blown AIDS, which will cause her resistance to disease to plummet. As she is prone to inflammation of the mouth, we only feed her dry food so as to keep her tartar buildup to a minimum. We also make sure her food will produce slightly acidic urine, to make her bladder inhospitable to the bacteria that can cause a bladder infection. She has been neutered, to prevent uterine disease and also to ensure she won't transmit FIV to her kittens. And we also think about ways to keep her life and her environment stable while she is still healthy, as stress is the worst enemy of an FIV-positive cat. It would be nice for her to have a playmate, but as there is no vaccine for FIV and we would hate for her to give the virus to a healthy cat, it would have to be a FIV-positive cat that she can bite in play without threat of infection. But worried about my ability to cope with having two cats come down with AIDS-related diseases, so far I have done nothing. If I gain enough self-confidence to deal with two FIV-positive cats I would like to get her a companion, while another possibility is to get a healthy cat when Peach is older and will not bite or scratch her playmate. For now, watching her run and jump so energetically, I get very sad thinking about what she will be like when she does eventually fall ill. And I get indignant that she should have this fate when she is completely innocent. Readers who have FIV-positive cats will know exactly what I'm talking about, I am sure.

The nature of this virus means we cannot hope for a vaccine. This means it is all up to us cat owners. Whether your cat is FIV-positive or negative, neutering is the best way to prevent fighting with other cats, which is a primary route of transmission. Neutering also means FIV-positive females will not pass the virus on to their young. Since there are many dangers lurking outside, however, I recommend that you keep your cat indoors as much as possible, even after neutering.