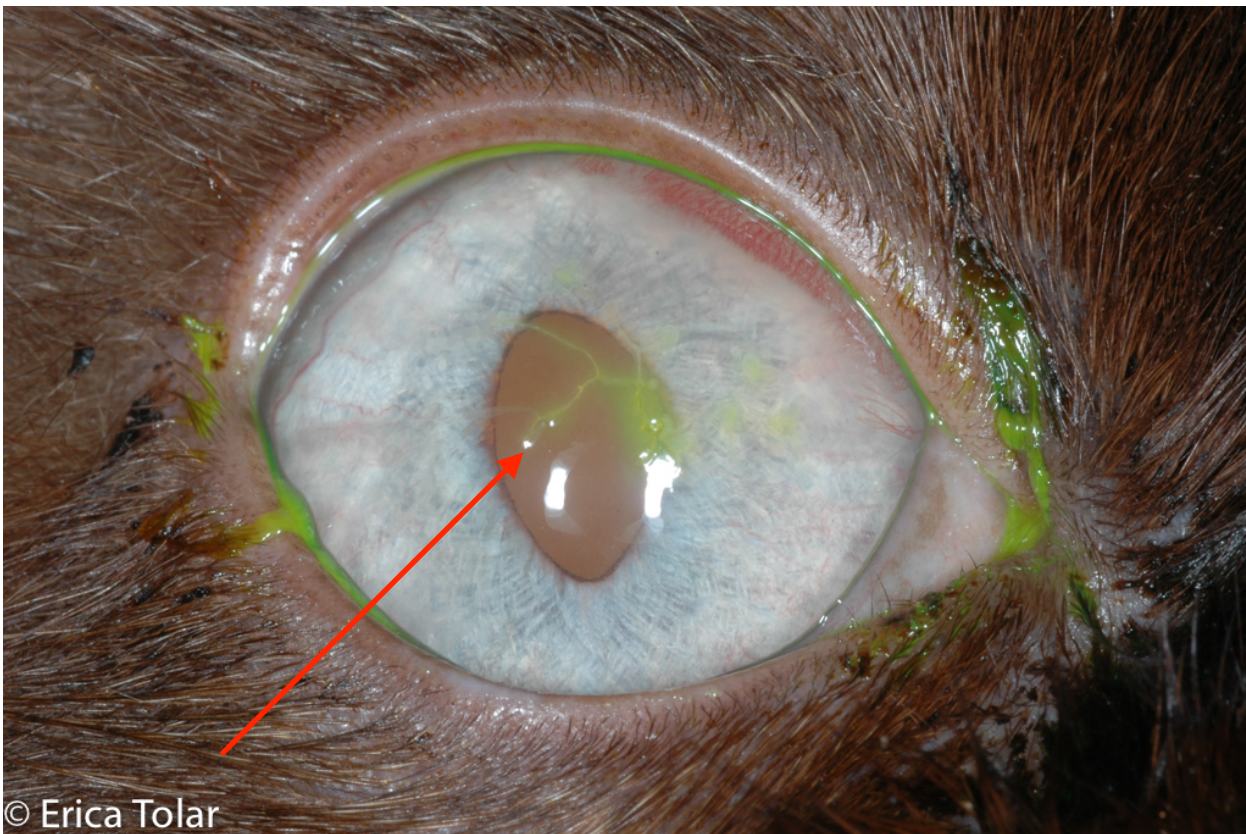


Feline Herpes Virus

Feline herpes virus (FHV) is a virus nearly every cat is exposed to. Many cats are carriers of FHV in a “latent” state where it stays in the nervous system but doesn’t cause signs of disease. Stress is the most common thing that will trigger the virus to reactivate. During these times of reactivation there can be ocular and respiratory signs. Ocular signs consist of tearing, corneal ulcers and conjunctivitis which is inflammation of the pink tissue surrounding the eye. Respiratory signs can be present with FHV and they include coughing or sneezing.

Testing for FHV is often unrewarding and even though cats can test negative for the disease it does not mean they do not have FHV.

Treatment for FHV is management of the disease. Unfortunately, FHV can never be cleared from the body and there is no permanent cure. Therapy and management are lifelong including minimizing stress in your cat’s life. Topical and oral anti-viral medications are available to manage FHV. Additionally there is an over-the-counter supplement called L-lysine which may slow replication of the virus.



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Here is a cat with a dendritic ulcer (red arrow). These ulcers are considered a classic sign for feline herpes virus.