

SORRY WE ARE CLOSED FOR ADOPTIONS BUT WE WILL BE OPEN AGAIN ON THURSDAY 18 MARCH FOR SOME ADOPTIONS BUT...

Why?

Last weekend, one kitten in our care was found to have ringworm so we have quarantined our shelter since then. We have tested every cat and kitten but test results take 10 days and a further test is required to give the all-clear.

Ringworm is a fungal infection, like tinea. It is easily treated and does not cause illness but it is contagious between animals and people. The cats and kittens are not sick.

Although the risk is very low, we don't want people to adopt cats until cats test negative at least once.

We can discuss the situation with individual adopters who may elect to adopt cats who have had a single (rather than two) negative test results. Otherwise, we won't be making cats available for adoption until all cats test negative in two consecutive tests.

BUT – we have a number of kittens in foster care who have been living in private homes and so have not come into contact with any of the cats here. These kittens are being desexed and, like every new cat to our facility, will be treated with a preventative anti-fungal wash. These kittens will be available for adoption from Thursday 18 March.

How did it get here?

Our cattery follows best-practice infection control at all times including preventative anti-fungal treatment for every new cat.

However, miniscule ringworm spores can be present anywhere and the extreme humidity in Sydney over the past several weeks means it is even more prevalent in the community. Anyone walking into the building could have brought in spores.

What usually happens?

Some animal shelters would do what we are doing and close down for a period.

Most would euthanase *all* animals in the affected area, treat the physical environment and then re-open in a couple of days.

We are not prepared to euthanase our cats and kittens for the sake of convenience.

Our cats and kittens are all healthy and looking forward to find loving homes. They've just had to wait a little longer.

What is ringworm?

Ringworm is *not* a worm and cannot be treated with worming products. It is a fungal infection that affects the skin, typically causing ring-shaped lesions. People can give animals ringworm, and animals can give people ringworm.

Ringworm spores can be found in contaminated soil. At this time of year when it is very humid, ringworm is prevalent in the community including in childcare centres and schools.

Ringworm is easily treated in the home. If you suspect your dog or cat has ringworm, see your vet. They might prescribe a topical wash, ointment or a medication or a combination of treatments.

It's important to avoid the spread of ringworm in the household and this can be done by frequent vacuuming and using an anti-fungal rinse such as Canestan in the wash. Always wash your hands and if you suspect you have ringworm, see your pharmacist – treatment usually involves a topical anti-fungal cream.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. The cats appreciate the approach that we have taken and we hope you do too.