

Face the Facts

Understand Bartonella to protect you and your cats.

By Arnold Plotnick, DVM

The cause of a human syndrome of fever, malaise and lymph node enlargement associated with contact with kittens or cats was unknown until around 1990. At that time, Cat Scratch Disease (CSD) was attributed to a novel organism called *Rochalimaea henselae*. In 1993, the organism was renamed *Bartonella henselae*, and the disease is now called bartonellosis. Several species of *Bartonella* can infect people, but *Bartonella henselae* is the species for which cats play an important role in human transmission.

Of the 60 million pet cats in the United States, about 20 percent harbor *Bartonella*. Cats acquire bartonellosis through exposure to their feces or fleas. Young, flea-infested cats that go outdoors have a higher risk of acquiring bartonellosis.

****For the full article, pick up the May 2007 issue of CAT FANCY.****

Did you like this excerpt? Subscribe now to read more like it.