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FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS

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What is Feline Infectious Peritonitis?

Feline Infectious Peritonitis is ultimately a fatal disease which can affect many organ systems. It occurs when the non-fatal Feline Enteric Corona Virus (FeCoV)* spontaneously mutates within the body into the fatal Feline Infectious Peritonitis Virus (FIPV). The fatal virus (FIPV) is most associated in cats less than 2 years old and can present in 3 forms: Wet (Effusive), Dry (Granulomatous), or mixed.

Wet Form is characterized by fluid buildup in the chest or abdomen.

Dry Form is characterized by sterile abscess like masses within any tissue or organ in the body, including the iris, intestines, central nervous system and lungs.

How is FIPV Transmitted?

The fatal virus (FIPV), specifically, is not infectious to other cats. The non-fatal virus (FeCoV) is transmitted when a cat ingests fecal contamination from another feline with the non-fatal virus (FeCoV). Mutation of the non-fatal virus (FeCoV) into the fatal virus (FIPV) is sporadic and spontaneous. Between 5-10% of cats with the non-fatal virus (FeCoV) develop the fatal virus (FIPV).

An overwhelming majority of cats diagnosed with the fatal virus (FIPV) come from animal shelters, catteries or multi-cat households.

What are Symptoms of FIP?

Clinical signs are dependent upon the form for FIP that develops, and which organ system is affected. Call your veterinarian if any of the signs are observed.

- Weight loss
- Lethargy
- Decreased appetite
- Fever
- Increased respiratory rate and effort
- Jaundice – yellow eyes, skin or gums
- Iris color change
- Vision loss
- Incoordination
- Circling
- Head tilt
- Seizures

How is FIP Diagnosed?

History, Physical Exam, CBC, Chemistry, Urinalysis, Ultrasound, Fluid Analysis

How is FIP Treated?

Unfortunately, there is no FDA approved treatment for Feline Infectious Peritonitis. However, some experimental therapies are currently being studied.

*Feline Enteric Corona Virus is species specific and unrelated to Corona Virus of 2019 (COVID19). 