

FELINE LEUKAEMIA VIRUS (FeLV) ANTIGEN ELISA



Outline

Feline leukaemia virus (FeLV) is a contagious retrovirus from the mammalian type-C group. Transmission is through contact with nasal or saliva secretions. This includes activities such as fighting, grooming, sharing water bowls and litter trays. Vertical transmission also occurs. Infection is characterised by the development of a viraemia which can be followed by seroconversion with elimination of the pathogen. Infected cats may also present a chronic, persistent viraemia which will lead to the development of both proliferative syndromes, such as lymphosarcoma or leukaemia, and non-proliferative syndromes such as anaemia or immunosuppression, followed by death at short or middle term. Diagnosis of FeLV infection is normally done via the detection of a viral antigen from the core protein, p27, which is produced in high quantities in viraemic cats. The interval between infection with the virus and virus production in the blood can vary from two to eight weeks, repeat testing is recommended 12 weeks apart to allow virus production in the blood should the cat have been recently infected and to identify permanently infected cats.

TEST: FeLV Antigen ELISA

The FeLV Antigen test is based on rapid immunomigration (RIM) technology, which detects the presence of the FeLV Virus Antigen (**i.e. current infection**) in feline serum or blood samples.

Species: Feline only

Sample type: This test may be performed on whole blood (EDTA) or serum (red top). Please send in at least 1ml volume.

Turnaround Time: Same day at both labs.

Results: The results for this test are reported as Positive, Equivocal, or Negative.

FELINE LEUKAEMIA VIRUS ANTIGEN ELISA INTERPRETATION: Positive

Viral antigen has been detected. However, as the prevalence of this disease in New Zealand is very low, the positive predictive value of this test is about 33% which means 67% of the positive results are false positives. For this reason all positive FeLV tests should be checked with the confirmatory immunofluorescence test.

FELINE LEUKEMIA VIRUS INTERPRETATION: NEGATIVE

No viral antigen detected. The negative predictive value for this test is 99.9%, so we can be confident that a cat testing negative is truly negative.

Reference

Galloway P. Feline Leukaemia Virus and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus, A New Zealand Perspective. Proceedings of Companion Animal Society NZVA Conference 2003. Pp. 93-100, 2003.

Any questions regarding this test, contact the Serology Dept on our NZVP Freephone Number: 0800 838 522 ext 2

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