



FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS INITIATIVE 2016

Feline infectious peritonitis is a fatal disease in cats that has no cure. In 2015, Morris Animal Foundation launched our Feline Infectious Peritonitis Initiative to create funding support and momentum toward finding a cure or prevention strategy for FIP in an effort to save the lives of thousands of cats that die from the disease each year.

FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS IS:

- a fatal, inflammatory viral disease that affects cats worldwide
- characterized by general signs seen in many other diseases, such as lack of appetite, fever, and weight loss, making it difficult to diagnose
- recognized as having two forms
 - the “wet” form includes accumulation of fluid within the abdomen or chest
 - the “dry” form involves formation of localized inflammatory growths on various organs
- a leading cause of death in kittens and young cats
- caused by a mutated form of a common, highly contagious, feline gastrointestinal coronavirus
- more prevalent in indoor, multi-cat environments, such as shelters, cat sanctuaries and catteries

A VISION OF HEALTH FOR CATS

During the last 15 years, Morris Animal Foundation-funded studies focused on finding treatments and containment strategies for FIP. Recent successes helped zero in on FIP virus biology – specifically how an often-benign, highly contagious, feline gastrointestinal coronavirus mutates into the deadly FIP virus. Thanks to foundation funding, researchers now have a better understanding of the cat’s immune response to the FIP virus, opening up possibilities for breakthroughs in development of novel therapies and vaccines.

BY THE NUMBERS

COMMITMENT

FOR INITIATIVE:

\$1.2 million invested in new research

3 years funding

FOCUS

CURRENTLY FUNDED INITIATIVE STUDIES:

1 diagnostics

1 treatment

1 vaccine/prevention

2 genetics

IMPACT

CHANGE DISEASE STATISTICS:

5 TO 10 times more prevalent in shelter cats

1% TO 5% of shelter cats die from FIP

0 effective treatments

0 cures

100% fatal

OUR INVESTMENT IN FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS

Since 1986, Morris Animal Foundation has invested nearly \$1 million in FIP research. During the next three years, we are investing an additional \$1.2 million, capitalizing on recent findings about coronaviruses, to help investigators around the world reach the next level of discoveries to save cats from this deadly virus.



understand genetic influences

In a recent study, our researchers identified mutations within the FIP virus highly correlated with disease progression. Two new studies focus on how these mutations help the virus invade critical cells of the immune system, allowing the virus to spread throughout a cat's body. Understanding genetic components will help researchers identify targets for FIP diagnosis and treatment.

develop a novel vaccine strategy

Despite intensive efforts, development of an effective FIP vaccine has been unsuccessful. Our researchers are exploring an alternative approach – testing a novel, noninvasive vaccination strategy against feline enteric coronavirus, the nonlethal virus that can mutate into FIP virus. This new strategy will be especially valuable where cats are at increased risk for FIP, such as in catteries, shelters and rescue groups.

find safe and effective treatments

FIP is a uniformly fatal disease and a leading cause of death in young cats. Despite the impact of this viral disease on cat health, no effective treatment is currently available. Our researchers are conducting a clinical trial to investigate if a novel antiviral drug can cure or greatly extend the lifespan and quality of life for client-owned cats with FIP.

develop new diagnostic tools

Feline infectious peritonitis is difficult to diagnose. Our researchers are investigating the presence of two genetic mutations in a viral protein previously shown to be FIP-specific. Results will help determine whether these mutations are reliable indicators of FIP in cats – valuable information for development of accurate diagnostic tests.



ABOUT MORRIS ANIMAL FOUNDATION:

Morris Animal Foundation is a nonprofit organization that invests in science to advance animal health. The foundation is a global leader in funding scientific studies for companion animals, horses and wildlife. Learn more at morrisanimalfoundation.org.

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