

## Diagnosis and Testing

Various UK laboratories provide testing for aspects of FIP.

Glasgow University Veterinary Diagnostics provides world class facilities and extremely knowledgeable team members regarding FIP diagnostics.

Glasgow's 'FIP Profile' is excellent and provides a comprehensive overview of FIP specific markers in submitted samples.

The FIP Profile costs £48.50 plus VAT (as of December 2022.)

Results from this FIP profile combined with The FIP diagnosis flow chart and associated webinar from Emi Barker:

[https://www.vettimes.co.uk/app/uploads/2022/03/BSAVA-CT-2022\\_Barker\\_Fig1.png](https://www.vettimes.co.uk/app/uploads/2022/03/BSAVA-CT-2022_Barker_Fig1.png)

<https://cpd.vettimes.co.uk/cpd-plus/companion-animal/cpd-fip/fip-how-do-i-prove-it>

and a Veterinary assessment of the cat's clinical presentation following the ABCD FIP Diagnosis Toolkit:

[http://www.abcdcatsvets.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/FIP\\_diagnostic\\_tool\\_Dec21.pdf](http://www.abcdcatsvets.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/FIP_diagnostic_tool_Dec21.pdf)

including history, signalment, test results and presenting symptoms etc should enable a Vet to reach a high enough suspicion to treat the cat for FIP. As stated by Professor Severine Tasker in the ISFM FIP Podcast, December 2022, it is no longer necessary to waste lots of money on endless, invasive testing to reach a definite FIP confirmation (as previously was the case to confirm reason for death.)

The key FIP markers which the Glasgow FIP profile may highlight and add valuable weighting to a FIP cat's diagnostic workup and then subsequent prompt access to lifesaving medication include:

1) FCoV (Feline Coronavirus) antibodies

\*the reason our group of owners are keeping this marker as significant whereas some Vets may not be is because FIP does not occur unless there is a source of FCoV (easily checked by asking about the cat's history and setup eg only cat, indoors etc.)

We are aware some cats may show 0 FCoV antibodies but we believe, at this stage, the cat will be very near death.

We are also aware many cats may have very high FCoV antibodies and be very healthy ie no FIP but we understand the healthy cat being presented and other results will confirm in cases like this that FIP can be ruled out.

FCoV should also never be present in fluid effusion samples of Wet FIP cats. This confirms FIP. The consistency ie full of proteins, odourless, straw like yellow fluid also raises FIP suspicion further.

An in-house Rivalta's test can easily raise Wet FIP suspicion further when the sample keeps its shape and stays attached to the surface or slowly floats down to the bottom of the test tube (drop or jellyfish like.)

FCoV may be shed in faeces but is irrelevant to diagnosing FIP. Upto 9 out of 10 cats carry FCoV, they shed it intermittently in faeces and this is how it is commonly spread between cats. Most cats have a robust immune system which eventually eradicates FCoV. Most are asymptomatic.

2) Decreasing red blood cells

3) Decreasing Haematocrit/HCT/PCV (ie anaemia setting in)

4) Increased white blood cells showing infection (not always the case in Wet FIP cat blood results as the WBC are in the fluid effusion)

5) Trending high Neutrophils

6) Trending low Lymphocytes

7) High Total Protein

8) Low Albumin

9) High Globulin

10) An Albumin to Globulin ratio (a:g) of less than 0.8. (Other conditions can also cause this, so it is not to be used standalone but instead with all other markers to reach a FIP diagnosis)

11) High Bilirubin

12) Increased liver ALT

13) The Glasgow 'FIP Profile' will also return an Alpha-1-acid glycoprotein (AGP) which if above 1500 raises the suspicion for FIP further.

Separately, a Serum Protein Electrophoresis (SPE) can also be requested and the pattern is typically characterised by an increase in the alpha ( $\alpha$ )<sub>2</sub>- and the gamma ( $\gamma$ )-globulin. The SPE can distinguish a polyclonal from a monoclonal hypergammaglobulinemia to differentiate FIP (and other chronic infection) from tumors.

The Expert UK Vet FIP Advice Team clearly and repeatedly have stated treat pending test results (Professor Danielle Gunn Moore: Thu 14th July 2022, 8:30 pm)

Update of FIP – is it a disease we can now treat?

<https://www.thewebinarvet.com/webinar/update-of-fip-is-a-disease-we-can-now-treat>

so the cat does not decline further and die waiting on labs to return results. 3 or 4 doses of antivirals will confirm FIP diagnosis by cat's response (or lack of.)

Key symptoms which should NOT be ignored and left untreated whilst awaiting results include anaemia and increased liver ALT. These contribute to the cat's lethargy, nausea, inappetance etc.

Top diagnosis differentials to be considered and tested for include FIV, FeLV and others eg Toxoplasmosis and these should also be treated for, pending results eg Clindamycin or Doxycycline for Toxoplasmosis.