

Feline Infectious Peritonitis FAQs

General

Is FIP contagious to other cats?	Feline coronavirus is contagious among cats, but not all cats infected with the virus will develop FIP.
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Diagnosis

Antibody tests	The majority of cats will have antibodies to FCoV. This is therefore not a useful diagnostic tool.
Can you start treatment before a definitive diagnosis?	Yes, it can be used as part of the definitive diagnosis. There should be other indications pointing to a suspected FIP diagnosis. Cats will generally respond to treatment, if positive for FIP within 48-72 hours, sometimes sooner.

Treatment

Is there a cure for FIP?	There are legally available options now, with peer-reviewed studies from Taylor, S. et al, 2023 and Coggins, S. et al, 2023, Green, J. et al 2023.
Should you give FCoV shedders a treatment course?	No, as it is our only major treatment tool for FIP and it can potentially cause resistance. We need to reserve these antimicrobials for patients requiring lifesaving treatment.
If the cat has commenced treatment on illegal, black-market drugs are they able to transition on to legally available products?	Yes, they should transition, and if the cat has been responding well to treatment, the Stokes formulation should be used to complete the course of 84 days. If the cat has not been responding to black market treatment, a short trial of Stokes oral GS-441524 may be warranted to evaluate for therapeutic failure due to quality control issues with the black market drug. If the cat subsequently responds to the Stokes formulation, they should complete the entire 84 days of therapy on this formulation.
Do cats need to be treated for 84 days?	Currently yes, however, there is work underway to look at reducing the duration of treatment.

Treatment

Is it essential that I give the medication twice daily?	No, evidence shows that over 85% of cats respond to once-daily treatment. However, TDM (unpublished studies) show individual cats vary in their absorption of oral GS, with those absorbing poorly to receive higher doses to achieve clinical and biochemical remission. The main objective is for the patient to receive its daily prescribed medication.
FIP progression: My patient started with effusive FIP, and now has developed neurological signs. What do you do?	This can occasionally happen. It is not a sign of the medication not working, simply the disease progressing. Treat any other neurological signs such as fitting symptomatically. Then increase GS as per the dosing instructions and potentially more, and consider moving to twice a day dosing.

Monitoring During Treatment

Weighing the cat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The cat should be weighed routinely (minimum every 2 weeks), and the dose should be adjusted accordingly.Do NOT leave cats on a set dose for the duration of the treatment. They need to be on mg/kg dose as they will gain weight as they begin to thrive.
What happens at 84 days?	The cat should be examined before stopping treatment. All assessments should ideally be normal. The cat should be re-examined approximately 4 weeks after stopping treatment or sooner if any clinical signs re-appear.

Concurrent Medications and Neutering

Concurrent medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nothing has been formally tested, however, opioids and NSAIDs have been used beneficially when clinically needed. Drugs such as maropitant may benefit cats when feeling nauseous and inappetent.Corticosteroids are contraindicated in the treatment of FIP. However, cats with uveitis may need topical corticosteroids. Cats with severe neurological signs occasionally require short-term systemic corticosteroids to reduce inflammation.
Are there any contraindications to routine worming and flea treatments?	No.

Concurrent Medications and Neutering

Are there concerns about vaccinating the cat during treatment?	No information is available on response to vaccination of cats receiving treatment for FIP although analysis of treated cases suggests that cats can be safely vaccinated after or during successful treatment without causing relapse. Vaccines should be administered as is normally recommended for the cat depending on its environment and risk (see WSAVA or ABCD Vaccination Guidelines). If urgent vaccination is required whilst the cat is being treated, due to the risk of infectious disease, vaccines can be given if the cat is well.
When is the ideal time to neuter?	A month after treatment is completed, however, if leaving the cat unneutered is causing stress, neutering can be performed with at least 4 weeks of treatment remaining.

References

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- Coggins SJ, Norris JM, Malik R, Govendir M, Hall EJ, Kimble B, Thompson MF. Outcomes of treatment of cats with feline infectious peritonitis using parenterally administered remdesivir, with or without transition to orally administered GS-441524. *J Vet Intern Med*. 2023 Sep-Oct;37(5):1772-1783. doi: 10.1111/jvim.16803. Epub 2023 Jul 13. PMID: 37439383; PMCID: PMC10473006.
- Green J, Syme H, Tayler S. Thirty-two cats with effusive or non-effusive feline infectious peritonitis treated with a combination of remdesivir and GS-441524. *J Vet Intern Med*. 2023 Sep-Oct;37(5):1784-1793. doi: 10.1111/jvim.16804. Epub 2023 Jul 4. PMID: 37403259; PMCID: PMC10472986.