

## ***Cytauxzoon felis* Test Update and Clinical Trial**

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*Cytauxzoon felis* is a tick-transmitted protozoal disease of domestic cats that is typically characterized by acute onset of fever, bi-cytopenia or pancytopenia, and icterus. This disease is endemic to the south and southcentral United States. This disease has been most recently recognized in North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina.<sup>1</sup> recognized *Cytauxzoonosis* is typically identified between April and September which correlated with the time we most frequently identify ticks on cats. Historically this disease has been considered to be fatal in nearly 100% of infected cats. Some studies have demonstrated that some cats survive infection. The VBDDL has recently developed a PCR test for *C. felis* that can be run on a STAT basis (24-72 hour turnaround) to aid in rapid and accurate diagnosis of this infection.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the VBDDL is collaborating with Dr. Leah Cohn at the University of Missouri and is performing a clinical trial evaluating two treatments for *cytauxzoonosis*. Preliminary data suggests that one of these treatments is associated with survival rates of over 60%. If your practice is in an endemic region that sees multiple cases per year and you are interested in participating in our trial please contact Dr. Adam Birkenheuer (ajbirken@ncsu.edu).

1. Birkenheuer AJ, Le, J. A., Valenzisi, A. M., Tucker, M. D., Levy, M. G. and Breitschwerdt E. B. *Cytauxzoon felis* infections in cats in the mid-Atlantic States: 34 cases (1998-2004). *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* In Press.
2. Birkenheuer AJ, Marr H, Alleman AR, et al. Development and evaluation of a PCR assay for the detection of *Cytauxzoon felis* DNA in feline blood samples. *Vet Parasitol* 2006.