



Feline Vaccines: Titers

A blood test called a titer is available to check protection against selected diseases. It tests for the level of circulating antibody in the bloodstream against that disease. Our lab sends their titer tests to Colorado State University, and about two weeks later we get the results that tells us if your pet's level indicates good or poor protection. Based on those results we can make vaccine and titer recommendations for the future. A high titer level does not guarantee protection, but is highly suggestive.

Why Do a Titer?

Titers make it possible to avoid repeating vaccines more than is necessary for your pet's protection. Any vaccine can cause an adverse reaction, either acute (e.g. vomiting, anaphylactic shock) or chronic (e.g. immune-mediated disease). It is ideal, therefore, to limit the frequency of vaccination when possible. Titers may be done for adult animals to see if they need a booster that year, and even juvenile animals to see if their kitten vaccines were effective (typically at the time of spay or neuter).



Available Titer Tests

Titer tests are available for the following feline diseases:

Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis: Also known as **Feline Herpes**, FVR can cause sneezing, nasal/eye discharge, fever, lethargy, inappetance, and ulcers of the mouth and cornea. Virus is shed in oral and respiratory discharges. Cats who carry the virus chronically can suffer flare-ups during times of stress.

Feline Calicivirus: FCV is shed in discharges from the eyes, nose, mouth, feces, and rarely urine. Symptoms include oral ulcers, inappetance, fever, lethargy, stiffness, joint pain, muscle aches, neurologic symptoms, and rarely seizures. FCV has been associated with persistent gingivitis in chronic carriers. FVR and FCV vaccines lessen disease but do not prevent infection, viral shedding, or the carrier state.

Feline Panleukopenia Virus: Also known as **Feline Distemper**, FPV is shed from all body discharges and secretions, and can live for up to a year at room temperature. Symptoms include fever, lethargy, inappetance, vomiting, and diarrhea. FPV is usually rapidly fatal in kittens.

Many boarding and grooming facilities now accept titers for the above diseases in lieu of annual vaccination. When planning for boarding, please set your titer appointment date at least three weeks ahead of the boarding date. This will allow enough time for results to come back and, if necessary, to give a booster vaccine with enough time for the immune system to mount a protective response prior to boarding.

A titer test is available for Rabies virus, but is only used to travel to certain states and countries. It is not accepted in lieu of vaccination by the state of Oregon.