

FELINE UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION (FURI)

Synonym: Cat Flu

Definition

- Acute or chronic Infection of upper respiratory tract is common in cats, specially the young, stressed and immunosuppressed cats.

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Etiology

1. **Immunosuppression caused by**
 1. receiving treatment with certain medications such as corticosteroids or anti-cancer therapy
 2. Feline immunosuppression virus (FIV)
 3. Feline leukemia virus
2. **Primary viral infection:**
 1. Feline Rhinotracheitis virus
 2. Feline Herpes virus
 3. Feline Calicivirus

These 3 viruses cause 90% of the disease.
3. **Secondary infection:**
 1. Chlamydia psittaci is common cause
 2. Bacteria may present as a secondary pathogen

Clinical signs

The most common form is the **acute infection** and the cats show the following:

- Fever. (Normal 37.8-39.2 °C)
- Sneezing.
- Serous or mucopurulent nasal discharge.
- Conjunctivitis and ocular discharge.
- Anorexia (off food) and dehydration.
- Corneal ulceration, abortion, and neonatal death may be associated with feline rhinotracheitis virus.
- Interstitial pneumonia, oral ulceration or polyarthrititis may be associated with feline calicivirus.

Mucopurulent nasal and ocular discharge



Diagnosis

1. Case history of young stressed cats
2. Clinical signs
3. Physical examination of the nostrils
4. Lab Diagnosis:
 1. Swabs or smears from conjunctiva, nostril, or pharynx should be examined for demonstration of:
 1. the antibody titers for viral infection or
 2. for the inclusion bodies in case of Chlamydia

Treatment

No specific treatment because URTI is a *self limiting disease*

Symptomatic supportive treatment includes:

1. Dried mucous and exudates should be cleaned from face and nares using warm water.
2. Placing the cats in a steamy bathroom or in a room with vaporizer for 15 minutes daily 2-3 times/day to help clear excess secretion.
3. Maintain adequate hydration and nutrition.
4. Apply membrane decongestant to remove the congestion and improve the breathing such as phenylephedrine 0.25%. Apply one drop daily for 3 days.

Treatment continuation

5. Antibiotic therapy is indicated in cats with severe clinical signs to control secondary bacterial infection :
 - Ampicillin: 22mg/kg every 8 h
 - Amoxicillin: 22mg/kg every 8 h
 - Chloramphenicol 50mg/kg every 8 h
 - Tetracycline 22mg/kg every 8 h
6. Corneal ulcer
 - Antibiotic ointment: tetracycline or chloramphenicol ophthalmic ointment applied 2-4 times daily for 1 week
 - **Contraindication** to give topical or systemic corticosteroids, which may prolong the clinical signs and increase viral shedding.

Questions