



## Letter to the Editor

# *Chlamydophila felis* in cats (*Felis catus*): antigen detection and evaluation of antibody response in Brazilian cats

Dear Editor,

*Chlamydophila felis* (*C. felis*), formerly known as *Chlamydia psittaci*, is a member of the *Chlamydiaceae* family and an obligate intracellular bacteria. It is primarily a conjunctival pathogen, capable of causing acute to chronic conjunctivitis, with blepharospasm, chemosis, congestion and serous to mucopurulent ocular discharge in cats. Nasal discharge, sneezing and other signs of upper respiratory tract disease (URTD) may occur in some cats. This is the first study of *C. felis* occurrence among Brazilian domestic cats from five cities in the northeast of São Paulo State. The study was undertaken using, for serologic diagnostic, the Indirect Immunofluorescence (IFI) and Complement Fixation (CFT) assays. PCR assay was utilized for direct detection of the microorganism. The experimental group had 151 animals, of which 73 were from catteries, 18 from veterinary clinical/hospital and 60 from public animal shelters. Of the 151 samples of conjunctival swabs tested by PCR, DNA of *C. felis* was detected in 6% (9/151). Anti-*Chlamydiaceae* antibodies were detected in 72.1% (106/147) of the serum samples

tested by IFI. Of the IFI-positive sera, complement fixation antibodies were detected in 9.4% (10/106) by CFT. Although specific, the CFT showed low sensibility when used for the search of anti-*Chlamydiaceae* antibodies in serum samples of domestic cats. Thus, a relationship between the presence of chlamydial DNA and anti-*Chlamydiaceae* antibodies in Brazilian domestic cats was observed together with additional clinical findings like upper respiratory tract signs, ocular discharge and conjunctivitis.

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