



Letter to the Editor

Private Veterinary Pathology laboratories in Brazil

Dear Editor,

Over the past ten years, the Pet Industry has undergone a significant economic revolution, attracting an investment of over R\$ 6 billion only in 2007. Veterinary Medicine has followed this progress with the creation of new Veterinary Schools and training programs, and the incorporation of subspecialties, high-end diagnostics and alternative therapies into the private practice.

Nonetheless, some specialties have not been able to keep up with that demand. For instance, while academia employs the majority of Veterinary Pathologists, very few professionals are currently working in the private practice and industry. Although a variety of Veterinary Schools offer Residency and Internships programs to train veterinary pathologists for clinical diagnostics, most professionals have focused their goals of postgraduate training on PhD programs which are totally research oriented.

Nowadays despite the high investment needed to start a private Veterinary Pathology laboratory, the turnover is relatively short due to the incredibly high demand. The few private laboratories available in metropolitan areas are currently stretched to their limits. Thus, as part of the mission of this Association, I would like to encourage and inspire professionals in the Veterinary Pathology field to pursue this career that has such a widespread opportunity in the current market.

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Letter to the Editor

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

Dear Editor,

Chlamydomphila 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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