



WINN FELINE FOUNDATION

For the Health and Well-being of All Cats

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WINN FELINE FOUNDATION AWARDS FOUR GRANTS FOR FELINE HEALTH STUDIES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MILLER TRUST

Wyckoff, NJ, November 23, 2015: Winn Feline Foundation is pleased to announce the award of four feline health research grants funded in partnership with the George Sydney and Phyllis Redman Miller Trust for 2015. Winn President, Glenn A. Olah DVM, PhD, DABVP (Feline) comments, “With the help of the Miller Trust, Winn Feline Foundation continues to remain at the forefront of providing funding for feline health studies. As the only foundation focused exclusively on feline medical research support, Winn Feline is in a unique position to help advance the body of medical knowledge on the cat.” Through the Miller Trust Winn Feline Foundation is awarding \$118,137 for studies in cats on developing a better treatment for a significant GI parasite causing disease; evaluating a safer drug combination for sedation and general anesthesia; finding a blood test differentiating an intestinal cancer (lymphoma) from inflammatory bowel disease, and multi-center clinical trials for treating severe gum disease with stem cell therapy.

Grants were awarded for the following research studies:

Targeting additional surface antigens for treatment of *Tritrichomonas foetus* in cats (MT15-005)
Principal Investigator: M. Katherine Tolbert DVM, PhD, DACVIM; University of Tennessee-Knoxville; \$21,775

Feline *Tritrichomonas foetus* (Tf) is a significant cause of infectious diarrhea in cats worldwide. Despite a high prevalence and lack of consistently effective drugs for treatment, the ways in which feline Tf causes disease are poorly understood. Using a previously developed model system to study this parasite outside of a live animal, Tf obtained from six naturally infected cats will be examined to determine the role of a specific protein, a cysteine protease (CP30), in causing disease. It is hypothesized that if CP30 is demonstrated to be present in feline Tf, inhibition of this protein may significantly prevent damage to the inner layer of the intestine in cats. Targeting potential inhibition of CP30 could lead to a future effective treatment of feline trichomonosis.

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The Winn Feline Foundation is a non-profit organization [501(c)(3)] established by The Cat Fancier's Association.
Member Combined Federal Campaign #10321



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Evaluating a safer combination of pre-anesthetic sedation and general anesthesia in cats (MT15-006)

Principal Investigator: Bruno Pypendop, DVM, DACVA; University of California-Davis; \$27,378

General anesthesia is required for a variety of procedures in feline practice. However, cats sometimes appear to have poor cardiovascular function during anesthesia. Dexmedetomidine, a drug commonly used for sedation, has previously been demonstrated to decrease the required dose of isoflurane, a general anesthetic drug commonly used in cats. However, the combination of dexmedetomidine and isoflurane results in increased compromise of cardiovascular function than use of isoflurane alone. This study has been designed to determine if MK-467, an experimental drug, will minimize the cardiovascular effects produced by dexmedetomidine, without reducing its effect on sedation, allowing the veterinarian to reduce the dose of isoflurane required to produce anesthesia in cats.

Differentiating feline alimentary lymphoma and inflammatory bowel disease with a blood test (MT15-012)

Principal Investigator: Kurt Zimmerman, DVM, PhD, DACVP; Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine; \$34,990

Cats are plagued by a variety of chronic gastrointestinal (GI) disorders ranging from inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) to cancer (lymphoma). Unfortunately, many of these disorders have very similar presenting symptoms such as lack of appetite, weight loss, vomiting, and diarrhea. A trial and error approach with dietary changes, antibiotic and anti-inflammatory medications is helpful in relieving symptoms in some patients. However, there remain a large number of cats that fail to respond to this approach. In these cats, stomach and intestinal biopsies are often necessary to determine the underlying cause and optimize treatment. Even with biopsy samples, it can be difficult to distinguish between IBD and lymphoma in some cats. Since treatment and outcome is different for IBD and lymphoma, it would be valuable to have a simple test that could distinguish between the two diseases without performing invasive biopsies. This study will evaluate whether a blood test, based on determining the pattern of blood proteins, can differentiate cats with IBD from those with lymphoma.

A multicentric study using mesenchymal stem cell therapy for chronic gingivostomatitis (MT15-016)

Principal Investigator: Boaz Arzi, DVM, AVDC, Dori Borgesson, DVM, PhD, ACVP; University of California-Davis; \$33,994

Feline chronic gingivostomatitis (FCGS) is a poorly defined yet common disease characterized by severe inflammation of the gums and oral cavity. The disease is also extremely painful and debilitating. Treatment usually involves removing all the cat's teeth with both antibiotics and immunosuppressive drugs. These treatments, however, are not ideal and there are significant side effects that affect the quality of life for the cat. A previous study determined that fat-derived mesenchymal stem cells (adMSCs) can be collected and

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grown in the lab from a very small amount of the patient's own fat. This treatment resulted in cure or substantial improvement in 71 percent of the treated cats. The improvement of mouth inflammation was associated with significant improvements in their quality of life. For this study, a larger group of cats with FCGS will be treated at two different leading veterinary hospitals - UC Davis (UCD) and Cornell University. Studies will also be performed to evaluate if adMSCs can be shipped over long distances without compromising cell quality.

***Winn Feline Foundation** is a non-profit organization established in 1968 that supports studies to improve cat health. Since 1968, the Winn Feline Foundation has funded over \$5.4 million in health research for cats at more than 30 partner institutions world-wide. For further information, go to www.winnfelinefoundation.org.*

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