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Is SPAY the only Way?

Contraception and non-Surgical Sterilization for CATS is in the Future!!

The symposium;

There will be over 200 attendees at the ACC&D symposium, including scientists, researchers, veterinarians, animal welfare professionals, public health officials and funders. More than 50 presenters from 15 countries and 6 continents will take part in the event.

The purpose of the general session, in which I will participate, is to help guide future research in non-surgical sterilization and contraception in cats and dogs through an understanding of stakeholders' needs. Scientists from many countries want to know about potential uses and opportunities for further research to refine existing products for managing cat reproduction. It is important to let the companies that will market new non-surgical products know if you would choose temporary contraception for your cats before they invest in research and development. They need to know what you would consider the ideal attributes for feline contraception. In addition, by answering the survey questions, your opinions of non-surgical sterilization will be of value.

For more:

ACC&D background:

Much progress has been made since ACC&D was founded over 10 years ago. The new special report *Contraception and Fertility Control in Animals* can now be downloaded by going to: <http://www.acc-d.org>

CFA has been an ACC&D "organizational partner" since October 7, 2006 when the Board unanimously voted to publicly support the ACC&D mission.

Scientists, with funding and assistance from ACC&D, have achieved remarkable progress in finding solutions for safely reducing unplanned reproduction for cats and dogs. Several products have been approved for dogs in various parts of the world, but none, so far, for cats.

The goals of the feline studies have been primarily focused on non-surgical permanent sterilization methods for un-owned/feral cats. Safe permanent sterilization has not yet been achieved; however, temporary contraception has become possible. Breeders of pedigreed cats may be interested in a safe, non-surgical method for temporary contraception as a part of a planned breeding program.

A breakthrough project to assess the safety and efficacy of vaccination to sterilize cats was published in 2011.¹ The cats were injected with a single dose of a vaccine in the right thigh. The vaccination suppresses the gonadal hormones. This one injection resulted in 100% induced fertility control. Duration of contraception varied - 93% of the cats remaining infertile for one year; 73% were infertile for 2 years; 53% for 3 years, 40% for 4 years, 27% for 5 years (at the end of the study). In addition, the vaccine eliminated the undesirable behaviors of both intact male and female cats, such as repeated estrous cycles, loud calling,

¹ Levy, Julie et al; U. Florida; "Long-term fertility control in female cats with GonaCon, a GnH immunocontraceptive." Elsevier; www.Science Direct.com; 2011

spraying, fighting and roaming. When vaccinated cats were later mated and delivered kittens there was a small difference in litter size compared with control cats (2.6 compared with 3.8 kittens). Further studies would have to determine whether this would persist in subsequent litters.

Another approach, implants for reversible contraception, has been explored with reported success. Several studies have been published in 2010 and 2012 indicating that small implants with 6 to 12 months duration have been developed for both male and female cats.² Queens mated later delivered healthy kittens. Another recent study assessed the effectiveness and safety of implants to postpone puberty in female cats and found this suppressed estrous behaviors and mating activity in queens without altering their growth rate.³

Much more research is needed. The economic cost factors and cultural considerations are also problematic. At this time ACC-D believes it is important to know if there is interest on the part of cat breeders, show exhibitors, pet cat owners and others in the US, Europe, Asia and elsewhere for alternatives to neuter and spay surgery as a means of sterilization. The audience at the symposium will include researchers and others who are preparing to further develop products and gain FDA and other approvals in the US.

I will appreciate your help in forwarding the survey link to CFA and TICA breeders through your breed lists or social media. Please send it also to pet owner friends, veterinarians and others. Survey responses will be analyzed by Survey Monkey. After review of the data I will prepare to convey your thoughts at the symposium.

Thank you for your help.

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ACC&D Survey URL
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RRPL6VF>

² Goericke-Pesch et al, 2010

³ Risso et al. 2012