

Feline Panleukopenia Virus (FPV) PCR Testing

ABOUT: FPV, also called feline distemper, is a highly contagious parvovirus affecting cats. It destroys rapidly dividing cells in the bone marrow and intestinal lining, leading to severe illness and high mortality.

SYMPTOMS: Sudden fever, vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, extreme lethargy, and dangerously low white blood cell counts. Kittens are most at risk.

PREVENTION: Vaccination is essential. Strict biosecurity measures should be taken in shelters or catteries during outbreaks.

GETTING TESTED: PCR is a rapid method for detecting FPV.

- Preferred specimen: 5 grams feces in a 10 mL ear notch tube.
- Handling & Shipping: Collect fresh stool directly (not from litterbox if possible). Keep refrigerated (2-8 °C) until shipping. Package with absorbent wrap, leakproof zip bag, and ship overnight with ice packs that are separated from the samples by paper towels. Do not freeze. A positive PCR result confirms FPV infection, with active viral shedding in feces. Infected cats are highly contagious and should be isolated. Negative results indicate no FPV DNA detected. A negative does not fully rule out infection, especially if sample is collected very early or late in the disease course. repeat testing may be recommended if suspicion is high.

FPV PCR tests are processed and results reported on Wednesday.

