



Morris Animal
FOUNDATION

FELINE REPORT 2016

Since 1950, Morris Animal Foundation has provided more funding to improve cat health than any other organization in the United States. From our first studies on nutrition and general health to today's new frontiers in infectious diseases and cancer research, the foundation is dedicated to supporting studies that address the distinct health needs of our feline companions.

In the last year, Morris Animal Foundation helped researchers around the world:



discover new approaches to treat feline cancers

Even with early detection and treatment, survival time for cats with feline oral squamous cell carcinoma – a common and aggressive oral cancer – often is less than six months. Our researchers found a targeted anticancer agent suppressed cancer-cell replication and spread in cell culture, and interrupted cell-signaling circuits that promote cancer growth. These encouraging findings warrant further study of this drug as a potential, new treatment strategy for cats with oral cancer.

develop treatment strategies for emerging diseases

Cytauxzoonosis is an emerging, life-threatening disease in cats caused by *Cytauxzoon felis*, a tick-transmitted parasite. Unfortunately, no vaccine against this disease currently exists. Combining genome sequencing and bioinformatics, our researchers identified 30 potential *C. felis* proteins that are attacked by the cat's immune system. Each of these proteins represents a potential vaccine candidate against this deadly parasite.



ensure the safety of drugs to improve the lives of cats

One common complication for cats with heart disease is arterial thromboembolism, an abnormal formation of blood clots within the heart that can dislodge and block blood flow to the legs. Our researchers showed that a new, orally administered anticlotting drug, which has shown promise in treating people with heart disease, is safe and may help reduce abnormal clotting in cats with heart disease, significantly improving the quality of life for thousand of pets.

OUR INVESTMENT IN CATS

Morris Animal Foundation supports feline health experts around the world. In 2016, our funding is helping researchers:

- investigate the effectiveness of an antiviral drug to treat and control **upper respiratory disease** associated with feline herpesvirus infection in shelter cats
- assess the effectiveness of a contraceptive vaccine to manage **overpopulation** of free-roaming cats
- evaluate a new imaging technology to detect cancer cells in cats undergoing surgery for **injection-site sarcoma**, a highly aggressive and locally invasive tumor
- upgrade the domestic cat reference genome sequence, an important tool for mapping genes that cause **feline diseases**
- build on previously funded research that explores a new anticoagulant drug that may prevent deadly blood-clotting complications in client-owned cats with **heart disease**
- investigate the role of feline foamy virus – a common, persistent, and seemingly innocuous infection in cats – in **chronic kidney disease** and **retroviral co-infections**
- develop new ways to diagnose, treat and prevent **feline infectious peritonitis**, a uniformly fatal disease and leading cause of death in young cats



ABOUT MORRIS ANIMAL FOUNDATION:

Morris Animal Foundation is a nonprofit organization that invests in science to advance animal health. The foundation is a global leader in funding scientific studies for companion animals, horses and wildlife. Learn more at morrisanimalfoundation.org

Contact us at: 720 S. Colorado Blvd., Suite 174A, Denver, CO 80246, or by calling 800.243.2345.

BY THE NUMBERS

FUNDING

SINCE 1950:

\$14.2 million invested

348 feline studies funded

51 institutions supported

HEALTH

36 CURRENTLY FUNDED STUDIES IN:

- 1** behavior
- 6** cancer
- 6** cardiovascular
- 2** endocrine/metabolic
- 2** genetics
- 12** infectious disease
- 1** nutrition
- 1** pathology
- 2** pharmacology
- 1** reproduction/overpopulation
- 1** respiratory
- 1** urinary

