

Retrospective case series of feline panleukopenia virus

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Objectives: Feline panleukopenia (FPL) is a highly prevalent and fatal infectious disease worldwide. This study aimed to characterize the clinical presentation, evolution, treatment, and outcomes of cats with FPL.

Materials and Methods: Medical records of cats treated for FPL between 2019 and 2023 were analyzed, focusing on clinical signs, vaccination, diagnostics, treatment, and outcomes. Statistical analysis was performed using Fisher's exact test.

Results: Most affected cats (80.5%, 33/41) were under six months old and all had recent outdoor exposure or contact with an infected cat. Twenty-nine percent (12/41) of cats died, with no gender differences among survival outcomes. Diagnosis relied on point-of-care testing in 58.5% (24/41) of cats, while the remaining were supported by strongly suggestive clinical signs, with ($n=10$) or without ($n=7$) previous contact with an infected animal. These approaches reflected the owners' decision rather than a medical preference. None of the cats had complete vaccination records ($n=2$ were unknown). Lethargy was a universal clinical sign, accompanied by anorexia (75.6%, 31/41), diarrhea (63.4%, 26/41), fever (58.5%, 24/41), and vomiting (58.5%, 24/41). The presence of both vomiting and diarrhea at admission was significantly higher in non-surviving cats ($p=0.0001$), whereas their absence was exclusive to surviving cats. Leukopenia (97.5%, 39/40) and neutropenia (92.5%, 37/40) were common, with panleukopenia being present in 47.5% (19/40) of cats at admission. Non-surviving cats showed no hematological improvement overtime. Median hospitalization lasted three days for non-survivors and six for survivors. Treatment primarily involved supportive care, including fluids, antibiotics, and antiemetics. Notably, metronidazole was administered to most cats (95%, 38/40), usually in combination with beta-lactams, with or without fluoroquinolones.

Conclusions: This study highlights the need for better caregiver education on prevention and risk-factors associated with FPL. Furthermore, these results suggest that the presence of both vomiting and diarrhea may be associated with a worse prognosis.

Keywords: Feline panleukopenia; cats; case series.

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