

Love your pet... love your vet

Focus on Chlamydophila Felis

Chlamydophila felis (*C. felis*) is a bacterium that mainly causes **conjunctivitis** (a particularly severe eye infection) in cats.

Known to cause up to 30% of cases of conjunctivitis, the bacterium is more commonly seen where groups of cats are kept together, such as multi-cat households, catteries and shelters. Although cats of all ages can be affected, disease is most commonly seen in kittens between 5 weeks and 9 months of age.

Signs develop within a week of infection and usually begin with a watery eye discharge. Cats often hold their eyelids partially closed due to severe discomfort and as the disease progresses, the eyelids redden and swell and the discharge changes from watery to thick and yellow in colour. Additional signs include mild sneezing, nasal discharge and, occasionally, mild fever, lethargy and loss of appetite.

As cat owners, it is essential that we keep our eyes open for symptoms of *C. felis* and other diseases and recent research has shown that cats kept in catteries with cat 'flu are more likely to be infected with *C. felis* than premises with no reported signs of cat 'flu.

If your cat catches *C. felis* it can be difficult to treat because a long course of antibiotics is generally required. There are, however, vaccines available to help prevent the disease. To find out more about protecting your pet from *C. felis*, or if you are worried your cat may be suffering from this or any other eye condition, contact your vets to book a pet health check and discuss your cat's vaccination requirements.

For further information on *C. felis* and all other aspects of vaccinations for cats and dogs visit www.future-of-vaccination.co.uk.



Disclaimer: The information and advice contained in this handout is for general information only. It is not intended to be a substitute for a veterinary examination and/or specific treatment or advice. You should always seek advice from your veterinary surgeon.

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