

H1N1 update: Cat death in Oregon from presumed 2009 H1N1

November 18, 2009 – The Oregon state public health veterinarian has reported that a pet cat has died from presumed 2009 H1N1 influenza virus infection. The cat was one of 4 cats in the household and became ill approximately one week after a child in the household had a flu-like illness. It developed labored breathing and was presented to a veterinarian on November 4. The cat was not coughing or sneezing but had pneumonia. The cat's condition deteriorated over the next 3 days, and it died on November 7. Samples were obtained and tested (PCR) positive for the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus. Additional samples were sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for confirmation and are still pending. At this time this is a presumed, not confirmed, case of 2009 H1N1 influenza infection.

The three other cats in the household also became ill with different degrees of sneezing and coughing, but recovered from their illnesses. Samples collected from these cats were negative for the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.

We continue to update our 2009 H1N1 influenza resources as soon as we receive and verify information. These resources are available at http://www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/new_virus/default.asp. We are also in the process of updating our “Frequently Asked Questions” document for veterinarians to include additional information about sampling and testing procedures, and anticipate the updated document will be posted within the next 24 hours. The document is linked from the H1N1 page or at http://www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/new_virus/new_flu_virus_faq_veterinarians.asp.

The messages to pet owners remain the same.

- This is not cause for panic, but underscores the importance of taking pets to a veterinarian if they are showing signs of illness. This is especially important if someone in the household has recently been ill with flu-like symptoms.
- Ferret and cat owners should remain vigilant.
- To date, all of the sick pets became ill after a person in the household was ill with flu-like symptoms. There is no evidence to suggest that pets have or will spread the virus to humans or other animals.
- Proper hygiene and sanitation measures should be followed to limit the spread of the influenza virus.

If you have any questions about these resources, or if you have information or news to share, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Kimberly May at (847) 285-6667 or kmay@avma.org

H1N1 flu confirmed in Iowa cat

November 4th 2009 - A cat in Iowa has tested positive for the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus, state officials confirmed this morning, marking the first time a cat has been diagnosed with this strain of influenza.

The cat, which is recovering, is believed to have caught the virus from someone in the household who was sick with H1N1. There are no indications that the cat passed the virus on to any other animals or people.

Prior to this diagnosis, the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus had been found in humans, pigs, birds and ferrets.

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) are reminding pet owners that some viruses can pass between people and animals, so this was not an altogether unexpected event. Pet owners should monitor their pets' health very closely, no matter what type of animal, and visit a veterinarian if there are any signs of illness.

The AVMA is actively tracking all instances of H1N1 in animals and posting updates on our Web site at www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/new_virus.

For more information, contact **Michael San Filippo**, AVMA media relations assistant, at 847-285-6687 (office), 847-732-6194 (cell), or msanfilippo@avma.org.

This e-mail was sent from American Association of Feline Practitioners (info@catvets.com) to drreed@vet-care.com.
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