

# ***Tritrichomonas foetus* infection in cats and treatment with RONIDAZOLE**

## **Handout for Cat Owners**

A recent study by Dr Jody Gookin at the North Carolina State University (who has performed most of the work on *T. foetus* infection in cats) identified that ronidazole (an antibiotic similar but not the same as metronidazole) has efficacy against *T. foetus* infection in cats (JVIM, 2005 19: 436; JVIM, 2006 20: 536-543). From limited studies its use appears to be relatively safe in cats, although a small number of patients have developed neurological signs e.g. twitching and seizures, which have resolved on stopping the drug. (The neurological signs are similar to those seen in some kittens, or cats with liver disease, when they are given standard or high doses of metronidazole).

**Ronidazole is not licensed for use in cats; it should only be used with caution and with informed, signed, owner consent.** Ronidazole (10% powder preparation) is commonly used to treat trichomoniasis in birds (e.g. pigeons). However, it is not available in this form in the UK, and the consistency of the 10% formulation is difficult to guarantee. Therefore, we have gained permission from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) to use 100% pure chemical grade ronidazole to treat *T. foetus* infected cats. This is the form that is now used in the USA. While the VMD have agreed to our use of this chemical in these cats, *they strongly recommend that detailed records are maintained and that no cat is treated without first obtaining informed, signed, owner consent.* In addition, we should compile data on all potential adverse effects. We therefore need owners to report all potential side effects that they see in their cats.

**Care should be exercised in the use of ronidazole;** there are very few studies of its use in cats and long-term studies in other species have suggested potential toxicity concerns (in many countries its use in food-producing animals has been banned to minimise human exposure). Careful handling of the drug is therefore advised.

Owner's name: ..... Cat's name: .....  
Case Number: ..... Breed: ..... Age: ..... Sex: .....

I ..... (Owner/Agent) have read this document, I understand that Ronidazole is not licensed for the treatment of cats, and that the preparation supplied is pure chemical grade and not formulated as a drug. I will inform my vet immediately if this cat shows any potential side effects e.g. twitching, wobbly walking, seizures, or anything else unusual.

Owner/Agent Signature: ..... Date: .....  
Contact details (Email, telephone or address): .....