

Service at TEST-A-PET

New website.

Our new website is now on-line!
We trust you will find it

informative and user-friendly.

It contains detailed information for veterinary surgeons on the parasitic diseases that we test for and advice on travelling pets for pet owners.

It also provides all the information necessary on how to use the service including our test profile, prices and downloadable submission forms; and additional pages containing news up-dates, articles from our bi-annual newsletter, further reading and relevant links.

We welcome your feedback on any aspect of our service, so please send your comments or suggestions via the feedback page.

Prices for 2009.

For 2009, we have held prices at the 2008 rate. Prices can be viewed on page four of this newsletter and on-line via testapet.com.

Christmas closure dates.

TEST-A-PET will be closed for Christmas between the 15/12/2008 and the 02/01/2009 inclusive. To prevent loss or spoilage of samples, please ensure that none are sent within these dates. We must receive samples before 12.00pm on 12/12/2008 for them to be tested before the close. Merry Christmas and a very happy new year!

Thank you for your custom.

Clinical advice from TEST-A-PET

Free pre and post-test clinical advice is available to vets using the TEST-A-PET diagnostic service from Dr. Jackie Barber on **07970 247 376**.

Queries most commonly involve **significance of test results**, especially low titres for *Neospora* and *Leishmania* tests. For both diseases a clinically ill dog would generally have a titre of 1:800 or higher.

For neosporosis, if a dog has signs compatible with neosporosis but a titre of only 1:50 this is probably an incidental finding; however it could be an early infection and a rising titre may be shown if the test is repeated after three weeks. The problem is the disease is often so acute that the patient could be dead by then so I would advise treating with clindamycin in the interim. The situation is a little different in breeding bitches – the risk to pups appears to increase as titre increases but if possible don't breed from a bitch even with a low titre as a few of these pups do develop neosporosis. Note the antibody tests do not identify which dogs might be shedding oocysts.

For leishmaniasis, the disease has such a long incubation period that antibodies should have developed by the time signs become evident and showing a rising titre is very rare. However, we report 1:50 titres with a note to retest in three weeks in case it is an early case. Note however that a

strong 1:50 titre will not allow export of the dog to certain countries such as South Africa, Australia or New Zealand. Titres may go down following treatment but are not a reliable way of monitoring effectiveness of treatment.

Other queries request information about **treatment**, especially for "exotic diseases". I have little personal experience of treating some of these diseases but have gathered information and opinions from many sources! One problem can be difficulties in obtaining drugs unlicensed in the UK – the forms to obtain a Special Import Certificate in order to access drugs such as meglumine for treating leishmaniasis can be downloaded from the VMD website (see the links page at www.testapet.com) and they have always been very helpful whenever I have spoken to them.

Advice is also available regarding **travel risks/prevention**.

Please note mobile phone reception is not always good so please leave a message if I cannot reply to your call and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

The Veterinary Parasitology Group initiated research into canine neosporosis in Europe and is a world authority on this disease.

Dr. Jackie Barber.
BVetMed PhD MRCVS.



Above: Snails as well as slugs can act as intermediate hosts for *Angiostrongylus vasorum* and warm weather favours their multiplication and survival.



TEST-A-PET

The Veterinary Parasitology
Diagnostic Service