

Dr. Pedersen on Relapses and Post-GS Treatment

Is it possible for GS-441524 to lose potency, leading to relapses?

First, GS-441524 is extremely stable in a highly acidic diluent, such as is being used by these suppliers. We have kept it for months in a refrigerator. More likely reasons for relapses include insufficient treatment (poor injections, poor quality drug), inability to get sufficient drug levels into lesions (such as the brain), or drug resistance (We saw it in 1 cat in both our GC376 and GS-441524 trials).

Are secondary infections such as toxoplasma or infectious anemia associated with relapse?

As for secondary infections giving the appearance of a relapse, this is very unlikely. Cats are the definitive host for *Toxoplasma gondii* and the infection is rarely systemic. In fact, the systemic form is so uncommon compared to FIP, that there is no good clinical reason to routinely test for it in cats suspected of FIP. Moreover, toxoplasmosis would be much more likely to occur in outdoor cats that hunt than in rescue or cattery cats that are kept indoors and fed commercial cat food. Feline infectious anemia, which is caused by a common and largely inapparent blood infection with one or more species of hemotropic mycoplasma or hemoplasma, could possibly flare up and become clinical in face of immunosuppression by another infectious agent. However, I cannot recall a case of FIP that was complicated by these organisms. Feline leukemia virus, and not coronavirus, is the infection of cats that is strongly associated with hemotropic mycoplasma. Nonetheless, I suspect that this is one reason why so many veterinarians include doxycycline in the cocktail of drugs that they have used to "treat" FIP.

Should cats who are post-GS treatment use Virbagen omega to bolster their immune systems?

A published double-blinded and placebo controlled studies of feline interferon omega for FIP showed it to have no therapeutic benefit. I feel the same way about other immune-modulators such as PI.

Should I try to eliminate feline enteric coronavirus (FECV) from my cat's environment after my cat is no longer being treated with GS-441524?

This virus is so ubiquitous, hard to eliminate, and so easy to have re-infect, that I have argued that attempting to eliminate it will be a highly expensive and largely unproductive undertaking. Although it is possible to eliminate FECV from a small group of cats that are kept in strict isolation and using fecal testing, in reality, this is much easier said than done. Finally, even if you do get rid of it from your cats, with tremendous effort and expense, what are you going to do then?! The only way to keep it out is to maintain an extremely strict quarantine of cats and people moving in and out of your premises, which largely defeats the ability to maintain a functional shelter, rescue or cattery.

How useful is the AGP test for determining whether my cat is cured?

The AGP test is popular in Europe, but I cannot figure out why it is so. The test measures what we call a "phase reactant" and is a measure of inflammation in the body. It is totally non-specific and adds hardly anything to routine measurements such as overall appearance of health, loss of body weight, fever, abnormalities in white cell parameters in a CBC, albumin and globulin levels, A:G ratio, etc.