



"My cat has just been diagnosed with FIP. My vet says the disease is fatal and has no treatment. How is this possible? What can I do? I feel helpless. I love my cat, I cannot bear the thought of losing him... please help."

There are no words to describe the feeling of utter despair and helplessness. We know, we've been there.

You are not alone, and you are not completely helpless. There are steps –important ones– you must now take to make sure everything is done to preserve the overall well-being of your cat.

And the very first step is to ensure you have the correct diagnosis. Why? Because errors are frequent. Getting a wrong diagnosis can be more devastating than no diagnosis at all. It is estimated that 80% of cats diagnosed with non-effusive FIP turn out to have another condition, usually treatable. The likelihood of error in the case of effusive (wet) FIP is lower but still varies widely depending on the cat's age and breed.

Making sure you have the correct diagnosis means talking to your vet, even if it means questioning his or her conclusions. It may just save your cat's life, so do it. Don't let the fear to offend your vet or the fact that you have no medical or veterinary knowledge stop you, especially if your vet recommends euthanasia to spare your cat from suffering needlessly. If this was your child, or brother, or yourself, would you accept the diagnosis at face value?

The number one source of WRONG diagnosis is a positive FCoV titer. 95% of cats are FCoV (Feline Coronavirus) carriers. It does not mean they will develop FIP. Only 5% of them end up developing Feline Infectious Peritonitis. We often hear "My cat tested positive for FIP". Let's be very clear: there is no test for FIP. It just does not exist. Not like for FIV or FeLV. Time and again, people –including some vets– will say that a cat has FIP based solely on a positive FCoV titer. Even worse, some will recommend putting to sleep on the spot. Please don't let that be the case with your cat. Let's clear up the confusion once and for all:

Positive FCoV titer DOES NOT MEAN your cat has FIP.

FIP is a difficult diagnosis to reach, and is a process of exclusion, particularly with the dry (non-effusive) form.

For advice on Feline Infectious Peritonitis diagnosis, tests and treatment, please join our [Facebook group](#)

Below is a table of differential diagnoses for both the dry and wet form of FIP. This list is non-exhaustive. Please discuss these options with your veterinarian.

WET FIP (effusive form) Differential diagnoses	
<p><u>This list is non-exhaustive.</u> <i>Always go over case history with your vet for additional options.</i></p>	
EFFUSION SOURCE	DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSES
Peritoneal (abdomen) effusion	Bacterial peritonitis Congestive heart failure Cystic kidney Glomerulonephritis Liver disease Lymphocytic cholangitis Malabsorption Neoplasia Pancreatitis Pansteatitis Parasitism Pregnancy Pyometra Toxoplasmosis Trauma Tuberculosis
Pleural (lung) effusion	Cardiac insufficiency Chylothorax Cryptococcosis Diaphragmatic hernia Lung lobe torsion Neoplasia (lymphoma) Pyothorax

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DRY FIP (non effusive form) Differential diagnoses	
<p><u>This list is non-exhaustive.</u> <i>Always go over case history with your vet for additional options.</i></p>	
CLINICAL SIGNS	DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSES
<p><i>(not all signs may be present)</i></p> <p>Appetite loss, ataxia, dull coat, enlarged mesenteric lymph nodes, jaundice, lethargy, ocular lesions, pyogranulomata on the kidneys, pyrexia, weight loss.</p>	<p>CNS disease Cholangitis Chronic URI Deep mycotic infections: - <i>Cryptococcosis</i> - <i>Coccidioidomycosis</i> - <i>Histoplasmosis</i> - <i>Blastomycosis</i></p> <p>FLV FIV IBD Hepatic disease Mycoplasma (Feline Infectious Anemia) Neoplasia (lymphoma) Pancreatitis Renal failure Systemic infectious diseases: - <i>Toxoplasmosis</i> - <i>Nocardiosis</i> - <i>Actinomycosis</i></p>

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