

Feline ACTH stimulation test

Indications

- Diagnosis of hypoadrenocorticism (Addison's syndrome) or iatrogenic hyperadrenocorticism.
- Monitoring of patients receiving trilostane treatment for hyperadrenocorticism.
- Not indicated as a screening test for naturally occurring feline hyperadrenocorticism.

Notes

- In cats, it is often recommended to collect blood samples at two time points (60 and 90 min) post ACTH (tetracosactide) stimulation.
- The dexamethasone suppression test (dexamethasone administered at 0.1mg/kg) is the preferred diagnostic test for feline hyperadrenocorticism because it is more sensitive than the ACTH stimulation test.
- The results of the ACTH stimulation can be affected by prior glucocorticoid administration (including topical medications), stress and non-adrenal disease.
- If exogenous glucocorticoids have been administered a withdrawal period may be required before an ACTH is performed to allow normalisation of the pituitary-adrenal axis. Please contact the reference laboratory for further advice.

Protocol

- ACTH (tetracosactide) is not licensed for use in cats.
- Collect a baseline blood sample (1 ml in a plain/gel tube).
- For feline patients receiving trilostane, collect the first sample 4-6 hours post-pill.
- Administer at least 5 µg/kg of ACTH (tetracosactide) intravenously.
- Collect the second and third blood samples (1 ml in a plain/gel tube) at both **60 and 90 minutes** post-ACTH injection.
- Ensure the samples have clotted and centrifuge the samples 30-120 minutes after collection.
- For samples collected in plain tubes, please separate the serum into another plain tube (this step is not necessary for samples collected in gel tubes).
- Please label all tubes with the patient's name and the time of sampling.
- Please include the patient history, including drug history, on the request form.
- Submit the separated serum samples and the request form to the reference laboratory (Test code FACT).
- Cortisol will be measured in all three samples.

