



Feline INFECTIOUS DISEASE Summit

Saturday, July 18, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM EDT

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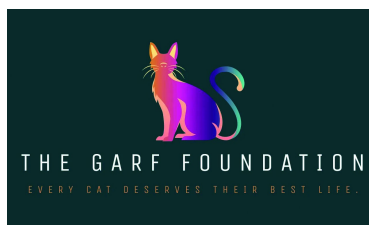
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The 2026 Feline Infection Disease Summit is Proudly Sponsored By



**The Tompkins Foundation
For FeLV Advocacy**



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10:00 – 10:15 AM

Opening Remarks

Kristen Petrie • Tech Tabby & Correspondent, Community Cats Central

The event will begin with a welcome address, followed by an overview of the technology and tools required for participation. We will also review the program schedule to ensure all attendees are prepared for the day's sessions

10:15 – 11:15 AM

The FeLV Lifetime Study: How Testing at the Time of Diagnosis Helps to Predict Survival

Dr. Melissa Beall • Director at IDEXX Research & Development
Dr. Julie Levy • Maddie’s Professor of Shelter Medicine at University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine

Adoption and long-term management of feline leukemia virus (FeLV)–infected cats is increasingly being embraced, due in large part to successful shelter adoption programs in the United States. However, little is known about the outcomes of adopted FeLV+ cats. We enrolled 127 FeLV+ cats adopted from the Austin Pets Alive animal shelter in a lifetime study, during which we initially tested for FeLV antigen and proviral DNA every month for 6 months, then prospectively monitored their survival for over 8 years.

- Screening with a point-of-care ELISA (SNAP® FIV/FeLV Combo Test, IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.) using anticoagulated whole blood identified more confirmed FeLV infections than screening with plasma or serum.
- Quantitative real-time PCR for FeLV proviral DNA loads (FeLV Quant RealPCR™ Test, IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.), along with a microtiter plate ELISA for p27 antigen (PetChek® FeLV Antigen ELISA, IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.), allowed classification of infection status as High Positive, Low Positive, or Cryptic/Negative.
- High Positive cats had a median survival of 1.4 years, with 2/90 still alive after 8 years, while Low Positive and Cryptic/Negative cats had not yet reached a median survival, with 26/37 still alive across these two groups.

Classification of infection status can establish expectations for survival, facilitate successful adoptions, and reinforce the importance of regular veterinary care for managing FeLV as a chronic condition.

About Dr. Beall | Dr. Melissa Beall is a Director of Research & Development at IDEXX Laboratories, where she manages a team of intellectual property specialists. She received her DVM from The Ohio State University and worked in small animal practice in New Jersey before completing a PhD in Comparative Medicine at Cornell University. Since joining IDEXX in 2002, she has worked to support many of IDEXX's in-clinic diagnostic products for cats and dogs. She is a co-author on over 60 peer-reviewed publications and an inventor on 14 IDEXX patents.

..... 11:15 – 11:30 AM | Break

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM

Feline Leukemia (FeLV) Essentials: What You Need to Know!

Margaret Tompkins • President, Tompkins Foundation for FeLV Advocacy

Twenty years ago, we were euthanizing FeLV+ cats. Ten years ago, we were sending FeLV+ cats to sanctuaries. We've learned a lot about FeLV in the last several years, but there's still far too much myth and misinformation circulating online. It's time to make sure everyone knows about the latest research, science, and expert guidance. No cat should die just because it tests positive for a virus.

It's time to dispel the myths of the 1970s with solid science and data. We now know how to virtually stop the spread of FeLV. We'll review what we've learned and how we can best apply that knowledge for the benefit of FeLV+ cats and their owners. Join us in this crusade to let knowledge guide our way!

About Margaret Tompkins | Margaret Tompkins is President of the Tompkins Foundation for FeLV Advocacy. She is a tireless advocate for FeLV education and FeLV+ cats, and actively networks FeLV+ cats all over the country. She is active on social media, especially Facebook, in promoting adoptions and education, and is a huge proponent of TNR, supporting shelter and rescue programs that provide positive outcomes for FeLV+ cats. She is an admin of several FeLV+ cat groups on Facebook, including Owners of FeLV+/FIV+ Cats.

..... 12:45 – 1:15 PM | Lunch Break

1:15 – 2:15 PM

Rethinking Retroviruses: FeLV/FIV Testing Updates

Dr. Erin Katribe • Director of National Veterinary Programs for Best Friends Animal Society

This session provides attendees with practical, evidence-based guidance on FeLV and FIV testing, interpretation, and management across shelter and community cat programs. We'll review current diagnostic recommendations, common pitfalls, and updates on point-of-care testing, with a focus on how pathophysiology impacts real-world results in these complex diseases. Participants will learn proven practices for screening, confirmatory testing, and follow-up that support efficient population flow, outcome planning, and humane, lifesaving decisions.

The session will also address testing strategies and implications for community cat and TNR programs, balancing disease risk, resource limitations, and program goals. We'll also cover clear communication approaches for discussing results with staff, fosters, adopters, and community stakeholders, to support informed, compassionate care for all the cats touched by our programs.

About Dr. Erin Katribe | Dr. Erin Katribe is the Director of National Veterinary Programs for Best Friends Animal Society and is a board-certified shelter medicine specialist. She oversees Best Friends' National Shelter Medicine team, which provides support to shelters across the country, including disease response, community cat programming, medical care for shelter pets, behavior support, and spay/neuter programs.

..... 2:15 – 2:30 PM | Break

2:30 – 3:30 PM

FIP: From Fear to Hope...and a Cure

Joy Smith • Founder and Ambassador of FieldHaven Feline Center
Bre Rickard • Co-founder of FIP Global CATS

Since 2021, FieldHaven Feline Center and FIP Global CATS have collaborated to advance understanding and access to treatment for feline infectious peritonitis (FIP). FieldHaven's founder and ambassador, Joy Smith, and FIP Global CATS co-founder, Bre Rickard, explain how FIP care has evolved from the underground treatment years to today's era of legal antivirals—and how collaboration among veterinarians, shelters, rescues, and caregivers is saving lives. Attendees will gain insight into diagnosis, treatment progress, and practical ways to support cats and their families through the emotional and financial realities of FIP.

About Joy Smith | Joy Smith is the Founder and Ambassador of FieldHaven Feline Center, which she established in 2003 and led as Executive Director until 2024. During her tenure, FieldHaven grew into a nationally recognized model for cat rescue, adoption, disaster response, TNR, and community-based programs. Now, in her role as Ambassador, Joy is dedicated to sharing FieldHaven's success and strategies with shelters and communities across the country.

Joy's passion is especially evident in her work with feline infectious peritonitis (FIP). FieldHaven became a pioneer in supporting FIP cats, collaborating with knowledgeable advocates, researchers, and veterinarians to establish treatment pathways. Since 2021, Joy has been mobilizing fosters and caregivers and championing wider access to emerging therapies.

About Bre Rickard | Bre Rickard is a co-founder of FIP Global CATS. She resides in Arizona and has been involved in the feline infectious peritonitis (FIP) world since 2020, when her cat, the world's finest feline, Bukowski, was diagnosed with wet FIP. Bukowski has been cured of FIP since May 2021. His battle with FIP ignited a passion in Bre for treating and supporting cats with the disease. She has since personally cured 21 additional cats of FIP and has monitored the treatment process for thousands of cats around the globe through her work with FIP Global CATS. Bre works with FIP parents in 19 states, as well as Portugal and Romania.

3:45 – 4:45 PM

FIP: From Death Sentence to Daily Practice

Dr. Petra Černá • PhD, DACVIM (SAIM), Dipl. ECVIM-CA, DABVP (Feline), MANZCVS (Medicine of Cats), RCVS Recognized Specialist in Feline Medicine, Assistant Professor, Small Animal Internal Medicine

Feline infectious peritonitis (FIP) has undergone a major transformation—from a historically fatal disease to a manageable and treatable condition in everyday veterinary practice. This lecture provides a clinically focused, evidence-based update on the approach to FIP, equipping veterinarians with practical tools to confidently diagnose, treat, and manage affected cats. We will review current diagnostic strategies, emphasizing the integration of clinical suspicion, laboratory abnormalities, imaging findings, and advanced testing methods. The session will then explore treatment protocols, including antiviral therapies, and monitoring response and managing adverse effects.

About Dr. Petra Černá | Dr. Černá is an ACVIM and ECVIM diplomate in Small Animal Internal Medicine, as well as an ABVP (Feline) diplomate and RCVS Recognized Specialist in Feline Medicine. She graduated from the University of Veterinary Sciences in the Czech Republic in 2018, where she also obtained her first PhD in 2023. She completed her Small Animal Internal Medicine Residency at Colorado State University in 2023, and her second PhD, focusing on feline infectious peritonitis, in 2025. She has a particular interest in feline medicine and focuses her research on feline infectious diseases, especially FIP. She is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Georgia.

4:45 – 5:00 PM

Closing & Cat Trivia

Kristen Petrie • Tech Tabby & Correspondent, Community Cats Central

Get ready to wrap up the summit with a session packed with interactive trivia and giveaways.



*A special thanks to our sponsors who made today possible:
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