

NEWS RELEASE

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Aug. 8, 2005

NC State Recruiting Cats for Study of Abdominal Lymphoma

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The North Carolina State University Animal Cancer Program is currently recruiting cats affected with lymphoma to study the effects of abdominal cavity radiation therapy following induction chemotherapy.

Pet owners whose cats are enrolled in the study will receive \$1,300 toward the cost of radiation therapy. Costs of blood tests performed during radiation therapy are also covered. Owners will be responsible for costs associated with diagnostics done during the pet's initial evaluation and for all post-treatment monitoring.

The study stems from a grant to the Animal Cancer Program from the Winn Feline Foundation to study lymphoma in cats. Dr. Laurel Williams, associate professor of oncology in the NC State College of Veterinary Medicine, is the principal investigator in the multi-institutional study. Other satellite clinics include Cornell University and the Veterinary Specialty Hospital of the Carolinas in Cary, N.C.

According to Williams, pet owners who participate in the study will be contributing toward a greater understanding of this combined treatment approach, which is an important first step in improving the outcome for cats affected by this form of cancer.

"In cats, lymphoma most often develops in organs within the abdomen, including the liver, spleen and lymph nodes," Williams says. "Because multiple organs can be affected, treatment has historically consisted of systemic chemotherapy."

"Unfortunately, cats treated with chemotherapy alone have a relatively poor and limited duration response to this treatment, with only 30 to 65 percent of cats responding to therapy for durations lasting six to 10 months. We are excited about studying the combination of chemotherapy with other forms of therapy – in this case, radiation therapy – in hopes this may ultimately improve the outcome in cats with lymphoma."

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The Winn Feline Foundation is a non-profit organization founded by the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) in 1968 to create a source of funding for medical studies to improve the health and welfare of cats. The foundation was named to honor CFA's longtime attorney and advisor, Robert. H. Winn.

For more information or for consideration of your pet, contact Williams at the North Carolina Animal Cancer Program, 919/513-6690, or e-mail clinical research technician Julie Osborne at julie_osborne@ncsu.edu.