

FLOPPY RABBIT SYNDROME: SERO-PREVALENCE OF ANTI-GLYCOLIPID ANTIBODIES, CLINICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL CHANGES

OWNER INFORMATION SHEET and CONSENT FORM

Background: A number of human peripheral nerve disorders, including Guillain-Barré syndrome, are considered to be associated with specific antibodies to surface structures of peripheral nerves (anti-glycolipid antibodies); this might also be the case for some animal peripheral and cranial nerve disorders of unknown origin.

Floppy rabbit syndrome (FRS) in rabbits has clinically been likened to the dog disease acute canine polyradiculoneuritis. Dogs suffering from this disease in turn have been shown to also exhibit antibodies similar to those seen in human patients suffering from Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Aim: To examine the sera of rabbits suffering from FRS for anti-glycolipid antibodies and to ascertain the pathological changes present in rabbits succumbing to this disease.

These findings then need to be validated in comparison to findings present in rabbits suffering from diseases with similar presenting complaints (posterior paresis or head tilt) and neurologically inconspicuous rabbits that may be sampled as part of a health screen or to investigate conditions such as weight loss or anorexia.

The potential presence of antibodies could lead to development of a test to help diagnose FRS, whilst the examination of pathological changes could support the development of treatment strategies for animal and human individuals suffering from diseases caused by such antibodies.

Findings will be publicised (in an anonymous fashion) at relevant events and in the relevant literature. Please note that examinations will not be conducted in a diagnostic fashion, i.e. results will not be available immediately.

Requirements:

- 1.) **Blood sample:** 0.5 - 1 ml of blood (serum-sample). This sample **constitutes the surplus sample of a safe volume removed for clinical investigations and in accordance with UK ethical guidelines**. Any serum not used in this first screen will be stored for future associated studies.

And/or

- 2.) **Body of deceased rabbit.** If your rabbit should die or be put to sleep as a result of FRS, a post-mortem examination could be arranged to look for any pathological changes. The body would be cremated after necropsy (individual cremation with a return of ashes can be arranged at a cost of £60 + VAT). Some tissue samples may be retained for future associated studies.

Additionally, your vet will fill in a questionnaire detailing your pet's name, age, breed and gender, a brief history and clinical features. These should take a maximum of 8 minutes each.

This project has been granted ethical approval by the University of Glasgow, School of Veterinary Medicine, Research Ethics Committee (Ref 63/16). All samples will be archived at the University of Glasgow.

For **further information** please do not hesitate to contact

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Rabbit name: _____

I have read, and understood, the owner information sheet provided for this study and consent for my rabbit to be enrolled on the study. I understand that I can withdraw my rabbit from the study at any time.

Owner name (capital letters): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____