

Research project IZS VE 16/12

Leptospirosis in pet animals and its impact on animal health

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The main aim of this project is to investigate leptospirosis as a possible cause of illness in a selected population of unhealthy dog and cats. The study will include animals with symptoms classically identified as leptospirosis, subjects showing chronic syndromes such as hepatitis and/or chronic renal failure and others with symptoms less traditionally linked to this infection. Infection with *Leptospira*, possibly chronic, in pet animals living in close contact with humans has public health implications as well as relevance for animal health.

Samples from clinical cases will also achieve additional benefits: the characterization and storage of local *Leptospira* strains isolated from dogs and cats; the validation of one or more commercial serological diagnostic kits as methods alternative to MAT for screening or diagnosis; the evaluation of the current antigenic panel used for routine serological diagnosis according to the National Reference Centre for Animal Leptospirosis; the evaluation of the validity of the available vaccines for dogs in relation to the circulating strains of *Leptospira*; the collection of epidemiological data about infection cases in pet animals as a basis for future human-risk exposure studies.