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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Retrospective Study Shows Cat Friendly Practices® Increase Testing and Diagnosis of Common Feline Conditions

New Study Shows that Cat Friendly Practices Perform More Diagnostic Tests More Frequently, Identifying a Higher Number of Cats with Issues Earlier

BRIDGEWATER, NJ; November 28, 2023 – The American Association of Feline Practitioners ([AAFP](#)), the trusted leader in feline health and wellbeing for the veterinary community and cat caregivers, is pleased to announce the publication of “Cat Friendly Practice® improves feline visits resulting in increased laboratory testing and increased diagnosis of certain common feline conditions,” a new article in the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery (JFMS)*.

The article is based on a retrospective study comparing practices with the Cat Friendly Practice® (CFP) designation to those without it, using data provided by the AAFP and diagnostic testing company IDEXX Laboratories. The analysis found that CFPs performed diagnostic testing at 12% more clinical visits as well as bloodwork at approximately 10% more total clinical visits and 9% more wellness visits. Additionally, the average revenue of a practice visit at CFPs was 17% higher than non-CFPs.

This additional testing resulted in identifying more cats with abnormal results, particularly those associated with the endocrine, kidney, and electrolyte systems. Detecting disease early is important regardless of the cat’s life stage, but can significantly assist older cats. Identifying disease in older cats provides more opportunities for early intervention, decreased morbidity, and improved quality of life.

“The [Cat Friendly Practice® Program](#) provides support for veterinary professionals to assess the environment, experience, and the individual cat by reducing the stress for the cat, caregiver, and veterinary team throughout the veterinary visit. It also stresses

the importance of educating cat caregivers to reduce stress associated with the visit, starting at home,” said AAFP CEO, Heather O’Steen, CAE. “Practice teams who have learned these tactics are able to implement and offer Cat Friendly interactions, handling, and environments to work with cats to get more thorough physical examinations and a higher rate of diagnostic testing.

“The bottom line of this study is that by CFPs doing more testing on their feline patients, they are better able to identify health concerns early, and, thus, provide treatment earlier in the disease process, improving quality of life,” added lead author Dr. Kelly St. Denis. “I am proud to be associated with an organization that provides these kinds of resources to help veterinary professionals throughout practices take better care of their feline patients.”

“*Early testing saves lives* is just as true for our cats as it is for ourselves,” said co-author Dr. Ashlie Saffire. “Cats are masters at hiding what is wrong with them. Therefore, sometimes the only way to really know what is going on is to screen them with diagnostic tests. Catching disease early can make a world of difference to the cat as well as their caregiver and CFP helps this happen.”

The article, “Cat Friendly Practice® improves feline visits resulting in increased laboratory testing and increased diagnosis of certain common feline conditions,” is available at the [open source JFMS](#).

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About the American Association of Feline Practitioners

The [American Association of Feline Practitioners \(AAFP\)](#) supports its members in improving the health and wellbeing of cats through high standards of practice, continuing education, and evidence-based medicine. As a trusted leader in the veterinary community, the AAFP has a long-standing reputation and track record for increasing the standard of care for cats through the development of practice guidelines, feline-specific education and resources, and [feline caregiver resources](#). Home to the Cat Friendly Practice® and Cat Friendly Certificate Programs, the AAFP encourages veterinary professionals of all levels to re-evaluate preconceived notions of practice strategies and advance the quality of feline medicine.