

**February  
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# Rhodes Vet Clinic

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**Newsletter**

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## Feline Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

Feline Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is a common, progressive, degenerative disease. The risk of CKD rises dramatically above 10 years of age and affects at least 30% of geriatric cats. When the blood/enzyme test is used to screen for decreased kidney function, twice as many cats are detected compared to using urine testing alone. Early diagnosis is important for this common disease and maximises the potential benefit of therapies aimed at delaying the progression of CKD. Routine screening tests such as blood and urine tests may allow for earlier detection of CKD, especially when changes are monitored over time.

**Stage 1** - No visual symptoms, Cats appears healthy.

**Stage 2** - Minimal symptoms, some cats show first signs such as frequent drinking and urination. In many cats you may still not notice signs of disease.

**Stage 3** - Increased symptoms. Only now do clear signs of disease become apparent such as frequent drinking and urination, weight loss, unkempt coat and loss of appetite.

**Stage 4** - Severe clinical signs, cats display signs such as vomiting, refusal to eat, dehydration, weakness and lethargy.



The exact cause of CKD is often unknown, but factors that contribute can include:

- **Age:** Older cats are more susceptible.
- **Genetics:** Some breeds (like Persian, Abyssinian, and Siamese) are more prone.
- **High blood pressure** or **hyperthyroidism** can sometimes contribute to kidney damage.
- **Infections** or kidney stones.
- **Toxins:** Certain medications, antifreeze, or foods can cause kidney damage.

There is no cure for CKD, but treatments focus on managing symptoms and slowing the progression.

- **Diet:** A kidney-friendly diet (low protein, low phosphorus) is important.
- **Fluid therapy:** Subcutaneous fluids can help with dehydration and kidney function.
- **Medications:** Depending on symptoms, medications might include blood pressure control, phosphate binders or anti-nausea drugs.
- **Regular check-ups:** Regular vet visits for monitoring kidney function and /or adjusting treatment



**Why did the cat sit on the computer?**  
Because it wanted to keep an eye on the mouse!  
**What do you get when you cross a cat and a lemon?**

A sour puss!

**Why don't cats play poker in the jungle?**

Too many cheetahs!

**How does a cat stop a video?**

By pressing paws.

### We provide:

- Surgery & Medicine for small and large animals
- Herd Health Advice
- Cattle Pregnancy Testing
- Bull Fertility Testing
- Lameness in Cattle
- Equine Consults
- Soft Tissue & Orthopaedic Surgery
- Dentistry
- Digital X-ray
- Ultrasound
- In House Blood Testing
- Nutrition

**Simpson Office:**

Please call 5232 2111

[www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au](http://www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au)

**Colac Office:**

Monday to Friday

8am to 6pm

Saturday 9am to 12 noon

**We are available 24/7  
for emergencies.**

**Our emergency number  
is: 5232 2111**

## Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Virus (BVDV)

BVDV stands for **Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Virus**, which is a virus that affects cattle. It is responsible for causing bovine viral diarrhoea, a disease that can lead to symptoms such as diarrhoea, fever, decreased milk production, and, in severe cases, death. The virus is also linked to reproductive issues such as abortions, stillbirths and birth defects. BVDV is part of the **Flaviviridae** family and can be transmitted through bodily fluids such as saliva, semen and urine. It can also spread through contact with infected animals or contaminated equipment.

**PI (Persistently Infected)** - An animal infected before birth that remains infected for life and can continually infect other cattle.

**TI (Transiently Infected)** - An exposed animal whose system eventually fights off the virus, infection lasts several days to a few weeks and makes the animal susceptible to other diseases.

### Control Strategy

Determine herd status by testing all:

- Calves (if calf is negative, the cow is negative. No need to test the cow.)
- Cows of positive calves (if calf can't be traced to cow, consider testing all cows.)
- Open cows and bulls
- Test all new introductions to the dairy, including replacement heifers and bulls (prior to introduction to the herd)
- Develop a vaccination and biosecurity plan with your veterinarian

### Surveillance Strategy

Test all:

- New cattle introduced to the dairy
- Aborted fetuses
- Calves that die
- Cows with increase somatic cell counts
- Cows with mastitis
- Animals treated for bovine respiratory disease and all other illnesses
- If a PI animal is detected, implement the control strategy

### BVDV Myths

**MYTH:** PI calves will be killed by modified live virus vaccinations (MLV).

**FACT:** Controlled experiments have not been able to induce sickness or death in PI calves following MLV vaccination. However, case reports indicate that MLV vaccination can cause a PI animal to become sick or to die, though far less than 100% are negatively affected.

**MYTH:** BVDV won't affect vaccinated cattle.

**FACT:** The tremendous amount of virus secreted by a PI calf can overwhelm a level of immunity that is protective under less severe exposure. Vaccination alone will not solve BVDV problems.

**MYTH:** Calves are PI because their dam is PI.

**FACT:** Recent research has shown that 7% of PI calves' dams were PI; the other 93% of calves have dams with normal immune response to BVDV and are not persistently infected.

**MYTH:** The greater cost associated with PI calf is the death of the calf.

**FACT:** The reproductive loss associated with lower pregnancy proportions, more abortions and higher calf mortality is the greatest economic cost of PI animals.

**MYTH:** A PI calf will be thin, have a rough hair coat and be a poor doer.

**FACT:** While many PI animals are unthrifty, reports have indicated up to 50% will appear in normal health and have entered the herd in excellent condition. PI calves cannot be visually identified.

## 2025 AFL Footy Season is back next month....

- \* Advise us by Friday 1st March if you are in
- \* Cost is \$25/ person for the season
- \* Tips in before the bounce of the ball each week
- \* Email tips to [cindy@rhodesvet.com.au](mailto:cindy@rhodesvet.com.au)
- \* Presentation BBQ at end of season

