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For the Love of Tater

Thu, 2012-07-05 16:06 — Robin Olson

Tater Tot's life hangs in the balance. Since I first broke the news a few days ago that Tater may have FIP, his foster mom Maria and I have been working around the clock trying to find out if this diagnosis is accurate. **Because he may have FIP, we have more questions than answers.** It seems every moment something changes and throws us into a tailspin of fear that this IS FIP. It really IS.

OR IS IT?



©2012 Maria S. As we found Tater, laying on the pavement, sick and flea infested a few weeks ago.

I flat out don't know. This is the first case of FIP I've ever encountered (*again, IF that's what is ailing Tater*). **I feared Tater was going to die a few days ago, but it's Thursday and he's still with us. I just found out if he has FIP he can live for a few MONTHS like this so any hope I had of it not being the wet form of FIP is dashed again.** I feel like I'm losing my mind trying to sort this all out.



©2012 Maria S. Tater this morning.

Tater had a fever as early as Sunday or possibly before that, but Maria only started to check his temperature when he showed

physical signs of not feeling well. **From Sunday to yesterday morning his temperature ranged from 103.4°F to 104°F. Yesterday morning his fever broke and his temp. fell to 101.5°F and today it is a normal 101°F.**

So NO fever for over 24 hours. Does that mean this is not FIP?

Tater hasn't eaten for a few days. His sinuses are stuffed up. He can't smell. **He walks over to his food and looks at it-so he's interested in eating**, but Maria has to syringe feed him. He didn't move his bowels for two days. Today he finally started doing that again, but it's a bit soft.

We discovered that Tater has Tapeworms AND Coccidia so he was de-wormed on Tuesday. [note: we have de-wormed him twice since rescue, but our dewormer doesn't work on tapeworms or coccidia]

Tater is on clavamox since his lungs sounded crackly. I know it can cause tummy upset so we have yet another call into the Vet to find out if we should change course or give him a minute amount of Pepcid to settle his belly after his meds?



©2012 Maria S. Unable to share his space with his sister, Tater's only comfort is knowing she's nearby.

The problem is we just don't have enough information to make certain we're doing the right thing for Tater. Maria has barely slept. **She moved a cot into the foster room with Tater so she can keep an eye on him** and continue giving him his medications throughout the night. She can't keep doing this. I'm lucky she's off work this week. **I don't know what we'll do next week when she has to return to work.**



©2012 Maria S. Tater on Tuesday morning and today (right)

Tater still purrs. Maria watched him as he licked his paw, then rubbed it against his face. **That he is grooming himself is another check that goes under the column of "Maybe NOT FIP?"**

We MUST do more tests. Nothing is definitive, but getting more information will help us possibly rule FIP out. Tater needs a complete blood workup done and we need to sample his abdominal fluid and check serum protein levels.

Between the emergency Vet visits for Opal's kittens and the daily Vet visits and medications for Tater, then more for Choco,

ChiChi, Coco and Latte, most of the funds we just raised are getting depleted quickly. **We don't get much discount on blood work so it will cost at least \$500.00 to do the tests** (*I added more to the ChiPln because I fear we may end up needing to do more.*). **If we don't do the tests, we can't give Tater the appropriate care he needs.** It would also be heartless to ignore that it would help Maria be able to handle what may yet come to pass if she can understand better what is wrong with Tater instead of playing a frustrating guessing game.

If everyone bands together to help Tater by providing a small donation, then it would really add up to making it possible for us to get additional Vet care for this sweet little guy.

If you can help Tater, please use the ChiPln widget, below.



©2012 Maria S. Tater would thank you for your help but he needs to rest so he can get better.

Your donation is **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE** as my rescue, [Kitten Associates](#) ^[1] is a 501©3 Non-Profit Cat Rescue.

If you'd prefer to send a check, please make it out to: *Kitten Associates* and please note on the check the funds should go to "Tater Tot" mail it to:

Kitten Associates
P.O. Box 354
Newtown, CT 06470-0354

Any funds not used for the care of this family will go into our General Fund.



©2012 Maria S. We just want our sweet boy back to his old self. This is Tater a few hours after we started treatment.

If you can't make a donation, you can help us by getting the word out. Every dollar helps and every Re-tweet or FB Share does, too. THANK YOU for caring about Tater Tot!

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Comments

Thu, 2012-07-05 16:19 — [Sally \(not verified\)](#) ^[17]

Tater's tummy ^[18]

How about some yogurt -- it has acidophilus, good bacteria. And/or Slippery Elm. It's soothing on the tummy and it's highly nutritious. Let me know if you need details on using it.

Thu, 2012-07-05 17:21 — Cheryl H. (not verified)

Just donated \$20 for Tater. ^[19]

Just donated \$20 for Tater. Get better soon, buddy!

Thu, 2012-07-05 17:26 — Catnonymouse (not verified)

FIP ^[20]

Hi Robin

Very sorry to hear tater tot's not feeling well, but BIG kudos to you and maria for trying all you can. If the treatment works, do share. He looks better on his last picture.

Just to share, my ginger had FIP, the wet form. He had it after he was placed in a boarding house as he had very bad gum problems and could not be a community (stray) cat anymore. Im trying to remember more but funnily memory just fails me at the moment. He was affectionate until the last 2 3 days when every little movement caused him discomfort. The vet drained

water out from his tummy twice and we decided that he didn't and shouldn't have to go through this another third time and we put him to sleep. (The frequency of water collecting up in his thoracic area was very fast as well, a sure sign that all isn't well). He was so sweet, and gentle. One of my first batch of community cats that I cared.

You tried your best, and from what i've read you are working through this logically and trying everything you can. Just deep breath, put your feelings aside at the moment maybe that will help you deal with the emotional wrangle better.

Thu, 2012-07-05 19:23 — [Christine Michaels \(not verified\)](#) [21]

Good luck! [22]

Good luck with raising funds and finding what ails Tater--you are so dedicated and such a guardian angel. We need more people like you and Maria for a safer, happier world for animals. THANK YOU!

Also congratulations on your nomination for the Petties Award!

Thu, 2012-07-05 19:33 — Sally Watkins (not verified)

Some suggestions for Tater [23]

I had a litter of kittens that were found in the landfill that I bottle raised last Spring that had symptoms like Tater. They got bloated like that after their first worming because they had worms so bad and once they were wormed and the worms died inside them the bacteria it created made them very sick. Their tummies bloated from the worms fermenting. I treated them with Amoxidrops and Albon. It took a while but they did recover. I fed them a mixture of kitten formula watered down and chicken baby food until their tummies felt well enough to eat regular food again. It was very touch and go for them for a few weeks but all of them survived and they are very happy healthy adults now and no FIP. They actually all still live here with me. The Amoxidrops will take care of his URI as well. You will have to wait a bit before you worm him again for any more parasites. His little digestive tract needs time to heal a bit. Worming is very hard on kittens. Rule of thumb I go by is if they have really bad fleas, expect really bad worms and be prepared for the problems with their stomachs because of it. I have seen it way to many times. I hope this helps.

Fri, 2012-07-06 00:01 — [Robin Olson](#) [24]

Great Advice, Thank You! [25]

I'll make sure Maria sees this! Thank you for the advice. It's very sensible!
Thu, 2012-07-05 19:36 — Catnynouse (not verified)

tater [26]

have you had tater checked for mycoplasma i had a housefull of kittens with it all presented with different symptoms but made better by doxycycline :-) good luck <3

Thu, 2012-07-05 20:55 — [Teri and the ca...](#) (not verified) [27]

Tater... [28]

I made a teensy weensy donation and just put one paw in front of the other. If you have more good days than bad each week, it really doesn't matter if it's FIP or an immune system overload due to parasites. At least in the photos, he looks better each time, and even if you lose him, if he has good days...he will know he was loved...

Fri, 2012-07-06 02:12 — Nina (not verified)

His eye looks like my Luna's [29]

His eye looks like my Luna's when she has flares up. Her eyes were filled with pus when we got her. They diagnosed her with herpes as a kitten. Every once in awhile she has flare-ups and goes on the lysine meds or treats and sometimes eye meds then she starts feeling better. Usually she has an antibiotic with that too.

Fri, 2012-07-06 02:22 — Darlene (not verified)

Ideas to toss into the mix [30]

Hi, I'm a pushover for those ginger babies; my "sweet boy" Chance was a very very young kitten stray (maybe 4 weeks if he was lucky) that got tumbled across the road by a truck (just a little snick in his tail and some occasional dance like no one is watching moves). He was covered in fleas and I gave him a bath in Dawn immediately, then he went to the vet within a few days.

My vet dx'd coccidia and said he was within days of death. He went through two rounds of antibiotics before he was clear enough to start the kitten shot series. He was negative for FLV/FIP. Now? He's a thriving 2 almost 3 yr old spoiled rotten

baby.

Then I had a rescue from death row, Gracie Lou Who, and she had what I thought was a funny purr and it was, in fact, lungworms. Something that my vet said is somewhat rare. She underwent two rounds of some heavy duty antibiotics before he pronounced her clear. Unfortunately it did some damage to her lungs, but she is alive and has developed that "I used to be a feral so I'm skittish but LOVE being spoiled DIVA attitude".

Lastly, I am a "failed foster" of Timmy (formerly Tiny Tim while on death row). He had a serious URI and uber gooped eyes (the first pictures of Tater reminded me of Timmy which is why I am mentioning him). He also had hook and round worms. So he was a hot mess as well. Timmy took three rounds of antibiotics, the last being clindamycin drops, as well as tobricin eye drops.

My vet, after I took in Timmy, and she realized that likely my adults (Chloe, Chance and Nabisco) would probably help take care of the babies as they sometimes do, had me begin to put **Viralys** on both the wet and dry cat food that was offered. My adults loved that I had kittens because I used kitten dry food with a tiny bit of theirs so that the kittens got the nutrients needed. And, what I also did for Timmy and Chance (Gracie Lou Who was semi-feral so she was and still is a bit reticent to touching/cuddling) was clean them with a damp warm washcloth to simulate them cleaning themselves, and I would cuddle them against my chest so they could get my warmth and feel secure.

My prayers are out for Tater. I think from the pictures he appears like he is slowly improving. Maybe taking over a little more of what he's trying to do will help him, as if Maria is fully the mom? Like the warm cloth cleanings.

Fri, 2012-07-06 06:25 — Kelly, Sweetpea... (not verified)

Love to Tater ^[31]

Lots of love and hugs to Tater! Just donated \$20 to help get the poor little guy going again.

Fri, 2012-07-06 12:42 — Catnonymouse (not verified)

I agree with checking for mycoplasma ^[32]

This used to be called "bartonella" and is treated with doxy for 3 weeks (I got mine blended into a liquid to avoid hurting my kitten's esophagus. The PCR test is expensive but definitive or maybe you could just switch to doxy from the antibiotic you are currently using. He looks young for FIP (thought usually it is 8 months or so) - my kittens who had the bartonella had fevers that rose and fell and had URI symptoms. I've read they also treat with Azithromycin now. Mine were very sick; I had to run the shower in the bathroom and put a vaporizer, etc., but they all made it through.

Fri, 2012-07-06 14:58 — Alice (not verified) ^[33]

oh no ^[34]

Oh my, poor little guy, and you! I really hope it is not FIP, that would be so cruel, especially because you wouldn't be able to save him. And FIP is sneaky. It's hard to tell in the beginning if that really is the case or if the kitty is simply just sick, has a cold, is reacting to deworming ... I am keeping my fingers crossed for you guys!

Sat, 2012-07-07 00:40 — Connie & The Crew (not verified) ^[35]

FIP ^[36]

I am fairly certain I have first hand experience with FIP but I did not have the necropsy to be sure. <http://www.kittyblog.net/2010/03/crew-history-fip.html> ^[37] Other than testing his tissues, there was no way to know for certain he had it.

First off, you did the right thing by not having the titer test done. It is useless. FIP is a mutation of the corona virus, and titer checks for corona virus. It doesn't matter if he has high titers or low titers, it only takes one to mutate.

Second, from all my reading it appears that the mutated corona is NOT contagious. Corona is. Highly. but the mutated strain is not. It was originally thought to be, but after more research they determined there is most likely a genetic component to why the virus mutates, which is why FIP used to run through catteries making it appear contagious.

I know nothing about this alternative treatment you are talking about. I can't talk to that. I can suggest you check out the groups.yahoo board for FIP, there is an amazingly dedicated group of people who have a lot of experience and who can suggest tests for other issues that your vet hasn't thought of.

FIP is a diagnosis of last resort for the simple fact that there is no test short of biopsy/necropsy to know for certain. Yes you can test the protein levels in the serum removed, but even that is not definitive - heck I wouldn't bother because again the experts in the field of FIP say there is no test for it. Rule out some other things. You are right if it is FIP he is most likely going to die, but there are a whole host of other things it can be.

mean while, treat what symptoms you can. Give the best nutrition possible. Probiotics are always awesome. Reduce his stress as much as possible, keep him warm and loved (so silly to write ... like you would do anything else..)

and if you can get a second opinion from a vet from a different clinic, I'd suggest that.

Sat, 2012-07-07 10:05 — Nat B (not verified)

Have you had a CORONA-VIRUS Test? [38]

Dear Robin, Maria and Tater,

here's a very informative website I found when I was worrying about my cat having FIP.

<http://www.dr-addie.com/> [39]

Dr. Addie is also on Twitter, she once answered a question I asked, she seems to be very nice and competent!

twitter.com/FIPvet

I keep my fingers crossed for you!

Kind regards and lots of love to Tater!

Nat

Sat, 2012-07-07 19:10 — The Wobbly Cat (not verified) [40]

FIP [41]

Hi Robin,

We briefly meet at BlogPaws 2012 and I think that I can help you. When Moki first got sick the vets suspect FIP. I did a lot of research on FIP at that point and came across a great yahoo FIP group (<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/FIP/> [42]). They are very knowledgeable when it comes to the topic of FIP and can help answer any and every question you might have in regards to the topic. It's an international community and you will get a lot of advice about what is being done where when it comes to researching and treating FIP. Many of the people in the group can also be located on Facebook. Contact either Oscar's mom (<https://www.facebook.com/oscar.birman.1> [43]) or Julie (<https://www.facebook.com/seamuskitty> [44]). This is one of the best FIP groups out there because many of the members are actively working with and helping to fundraise for FIP research.

Love,

Moki The Wobbly Cat

Sun, 2012-07-08 23:46 — Robin Olson [24]

Yay, Moki! [45]

Thank you so much! I'll definitely look into it!

Sat, 2012-07-07 20:34 — Malinda (not verified)

Chip In for Tater Tot [46]

I chipped in \$20 for Tater's care. I wish I could do more, but I have 15 furbabies myself. Bless you for taking care of this little guy. I'm praying for him to make it!

Mon, 2012-07-09 13:13 — Pam (not verified)

Tater - testing [47]

I concur with the poster who suggested Dr. Addie's site - she is probably the world's foremost authority on FIP and has a list of parameters on her site that would indicate possible diagnosis of FIP. Many vets are quick to suggest FIP as a diagnosis before ruling other things out, and many cats have been euthanized that probably did not have FIP. If there is fluid in the abdomen this is unfortunately not a good sign, but still could possibly be something other than FIP - perhaps bacterial peritonitis. Bloodwork should differentiate this. If it comes down to really believing Tater could have FIP, Dr. Alfred LeGrand at U. Tennessee has developed a treatment called polyprenyl immunostimulant that has had some success in trials for dry FIP, although it doesn't seem to work as well - if at all - for wet FIP. However, it has also helped in a small trial for upper respiratory/feline herpes virus. For mycoplasma/feleuk/FIV testing (including Western Blot and IFA confirmatory testing) consider National Veterinary Laboratory in Franklin Lakes, NJ - you can find them online - run by Dr. Hardy, who originally developed the IFA for feleuk - VERY reasonable prices, discounts to rescues, and very fast service. Since Tater has checked positive for coccidia, be aware that coccidia can sometime cause anemia. We recently had a kitten who at first responded to Albon treatment for coccidia, then when the Albon was stopped went back downhill severely - dropped weight crazily, became lethargic and very ill. Gave Panacur and had to retreat him for the coccidia - he had become v. anemic. Gave fluids, cobalamin (B12 injectable), Pet-tinic and syringe fed baby food and Hill's a/d with Fortiflora probiotics. He was also on clavamox for URI, but he ultimately survived, gained weight, flourished and now has a great home. Good luck with Tater.

Thank you, Pam [48]

We'll keep an eye out for him becoming anemic. I was able to find out about Dr Addie and the Vets at Sass and Sass were in touch with me if Tater had the dry form of FIP. Now we are pretty sure the Vet was WRONG and Tater does NOT have FIP at all but what I was hoping for..he has multiple parasites and a bad URI..he is gaining weight, perky, playing, and his belly is not so big. This is definitely not a cat about to pass away..so the (new) Vet thinks it is NOT FIP...and we agree! THANK GOD.

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Robin @ [Google+](#)

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