

**FELINE EOSINOPHILIC CONJUNCTIVITIS** (I. Allgoewer<sup>1</sup>, E. Schäffer<sup>2</sup>, C. Stockhaus<sup>1</sup> and A. Vöggtlin<sup>3</sup>) Small Animal Clinic, Free University Berlin, Germany<sup>1</sup>; GSF-Inst. of Pathology, Oberschleißheim, Germany<sup>2</sup>; Inst. of Virology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Zurich, Switzerland<sup>3</sup>.

**Purpose.** To review cases of feline eosinophilic conjunctivitis for signalment, clinical appearance, cytologic and histologic features, results of electronmicroscopic examinations for herpes inclusion bodies and PCR for Feline Herpes Virus1 as well as treatment outcome. **Methods.** The records of twelve cats with eosinophilic conjunctivitis presented to the Small Animal Clinic at the Free University of Berlin, Germany, over a period of 26 months (March, 1997 to May, 1999) were reviewed. **Results.** Four different breeds of both genders were affected. Age at presentation was 1 to 15 years (mean 7,2 years). Seven cats showed unilateral, five cats bilateral eye involvement. All cats showed pathologic changes of the lid in the affected eye(s) with swelling, depigmentation and erosions of the lower lid margin (12/12) and nasal canthus (4/12). Other common clinical findings were blepharospasm (12/12), swelling and redness of conjunctiva and third eyelid (12/12) as well as mucous to mucopurulent discharge (11/12) of the affected eye(s). Corneal changes were not present. In every patient the frequency of eosinophils in cytologic specimens was more than 10%, neutrophils ranged from 5-83%. The numbers of lymphocytes and plasmacells were mostly less than 5 %. In the histologic conjunctival biopsy specimens hyperplastic erosive or sometimes ulcerative epithelium was seen. In some cases neovascularised stroma was noted. Electronmicroscopic evaluation showed no evidence of herpes virus. The cytological findings correlated well with the histopathological findings in our patients. 8/12 cats were tested for FHV1 by PCR (tears, nasal discharge and saliva). Four cats were FHV1 positive on gingival swabs, all other samples were negative. Topical treatment (12/12) combined with systemic megestrol acetate (2/12) or subconjunctival triamcinolon (1/12) resolved the clinical signs within three and six weeks. 10/12 cats needed longterm treatment. **Conclusions.** The twelve cases suggest that feline eosinophilic conjunctivitis is a chronic inflammatory uni- or bilateral disease in the adult cat. Typically the lid margin was involved, thickened, depigmented and erosive. Cytological examination of conjunctival scrapings was a valuable tool to detect eosinophilic conjunctivitis. Topical or systemic antiinflammatory drugs resolved the clinical symptoms in all our cases within a short period of time. Neither electronmicroscopy nor PCR was able to detect an etiopathogenic involvement of FHV1 in the represented cases.