

Plain Language Statement

Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences



Project: Assessing veterinarian attitudes towards immunocontraceptive use in cats

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project conducted at the Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences at The University of Melbourne. Please read this Plain Language Statement carefully as it contains all the information you need to know about the project and aims to explain to you as transparently as possible all of the procedures involved in this project so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research. You should print off a copy of the Plain Language Statement to keep as a record.

Your participation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

What is this research about?

The purpose of this study is to assess current veterinarian attitudes towards the use of immunocontraceptives as a form of reproductive sterilisation in cats through the online survey Qualtrics. The results of this survey are aimed to allow us to better understand veterinarians' attitudes and may highlight a new research direction for the use of immunocontraceptives, which is so far limited to that of stray populations of cats and wild animals. By implementing its use into clinics, veterinarians may be able to provide clients with more options and hopefully increase compliance for desexing animals to help prevent further population overgrowth in cats.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a survey through the online survey tool Qualtrics either on a computer/laptop or personal device. Questions are multiple choice but allow you the freedom to elaborate should you wish. Completion of the survey should take approximately 10 minutes. In recognition of your time, after you complete the survey, you are able to go into the running to win one of two \$50 VISA gift cards. This gift voucher will be sent to your nominated email address provided through the link at the end of the survey. This email address is stored separately from the rest of your data and is retained only for the purpose of sending the gift vouchers to the winners. Once the study has been completed and gift vouchers have been sent, your email address will be deleted from our records. To participate in this research, you must be a practising veterinarian treating cats.

What are the possible benefits?

We cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this project, however the results of this research may benefit the veterinary profession as a whole by providing new scope for the use of immunocontraceptives in a clinical veterinary environment.

Participants that complete the survey are able to go into the running to win one of two \$50 VISA gift cards.

What are the possible risks?

It is not expected that you will be exposed to any physical risk or psychological distress by participating in this project, beyond the time taken to complete the survey. In the unlikely event that your participation results in distress, the contact numbers of the researchers involved have been provided. Feel free to contact them at any time. Should anxiety or distress occur at any stage, participants are advised to withdraw from participating in the project. Participants will not incur any risk from withdrawing from the study.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in any research project is voluntary. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO TAKE PART YOU ARE NOT OBLIGED TO. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to exit the survey at any stage. Any data associated with an incomplete survey will be removed. Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with The University of Melbourne.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

As the data will contain no identifying personal information only group results will be available to report. The results will be reported as a part of a final year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine research project. Summarised data can be made available to you upon request. This research is aimed to result in a published manuscript.

What will happen to information about me?

Data collected as part of the project will not be associated with any identifying information.

No other identifying information is collected with your responses. All information gathered from participants will be kept securely. Only the research staff directly linked with the project will have access to the data. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. Only group data will be disseminated. As a result, no one's personal data will be presented, nor will any identifiable information be relevant or disclosed in the reporting of results. The data will be kept on password protected, university computers for 5 years and then destroyed. It won't be used for other projects.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact the researchers Drs Natali Krekeler (krekeler@unimelb.edu.au), Ellen Cottingham (ellen.cottingham@unimelb.edu.au), or Sharon wills (smwills@student.unimelb.edu.au)

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially.