

BILE ACID STIMULATION TEST

Indications

- Used as a test of hepatic function.
- Diagnostic test for feline and canine hepatobiliary diseases and portosystemic vascular abnormalities
- Note: Caution should be exercised in interpreting this test result in jaundiced patients. Cholestasis may result in increased bile acid levels and this may not be indicative of liver dysfunction.

Notes

- Following ingestion of a fatty meal, gallbladder contraction releases bile acids into the duodenum to allow emulsification and absorption of fats. Bile acids are reabsorbed into the portal circulation from the small intestine and reabsorbed into hepatocytes.
- In normal animals hepatic clearance of bile acids is very efficient with only low levels being present in peripheral blood post prandially. Significant hepatocellular dysfunction, reduced hepatic functional mass or shunting of blood away from the liver can all result in high bile acid levels.
- The exact form of fatty meal required is not critical provided it induces gallbladder contraction. Proprietary paediatric diets are recommended. In anorexic animals forced feeding should be performed.

Protocol

- Fast the animal for 12 hours.
- Take a baseline blood sample (1-2 ml blood in plain/gel tube).
- Administer regular meal of dog or cat food
- Take a second sample of blood 2 hours after eating as above.
- Label tubes with name and time of sample.
- Submit tubes **with separated serum** and request form to the laboratory.