BattLab Quality Veterinary Diagnostics from disease to optimal health

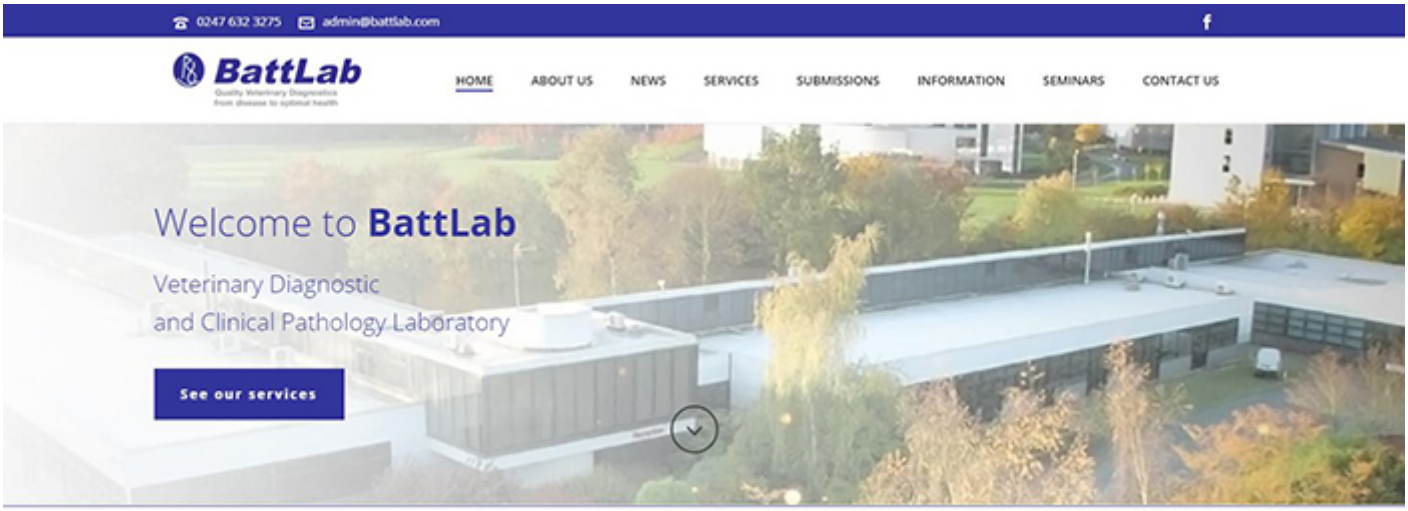
Newsletter 05/2017

We are pleased to welcome you to the monthly BattLab newsletter. This newsletter will bring you the latest news and information about our laboratory and all tests that we can offer to all our clients.

FROM THE SECOND BATTLAB EVENING SEMINAR

From our whole staff, a great big thank you to all the veterinarians that last month attended our second seminar on endocrine disorders. We hope you found the talk from Noel Clancey inspirational and we look forward to see you at the next seminar on feline hyperthyroidism, which is planned for the 4th of July and will have a special guest: **Tim Williams**, Lecturer in Veterinary Clinical Pathology at the **University of Cambridge**. Keep an eye on our Website and Facebook page for more information.

NEW BATTLAB WEBSITE



We are also excited to announce that our new website is live. The updated site includes a completely new and modern layout, with dropdown menus for both mobile and desktop versions. We have also improved the structure of our content, so you'll get more from a quick read. There is a whole host of impactful changes, all to make your experience of the adjust site that much better for you. Don't miss it.

WHAT'S NEW ON RABBIT HAEMORRHAGIC DISEASE (RHD)

Given the high interest in this subject, we have decided to provide some updated information on rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD) and answers to the most common questions we received from our clients.

What is RHD?

Rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus (RHDV) is a calicivirus of the genus Lagovirus that causes rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD) in adult European rabbits.

Why there is so much interested about this disease nowadays?

In Summer 2010, a RHDV variant (called RHDV2) was detected in France following which it spread across mainland Europe and arrived also in Great Britain. Several cases of RHDV2 infections have been confirmed in the last year in Great Britain both in wild and domestic rabbits, and included rabbits that had been vaccinated with the current RHD vaccine.

Which clinical signs RHD may cause?

RHD causes high mortality, with individuals succumbing between 48-72h post-infection in peracute forms. The disease is characterised by acute necrotising hepatitis, but haemorrhage due to disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC) particularly in the lungs, heart, and kidneys may also occur. Acute infections are accompanied by anorexia, apathy and neurologic signs such as opisthotonos, excitement, paralysis and ataxia may also be observed. There are occasionally some respiratory signs and bloody nasal discharge. Subacute forms of the disease present similar, but milder clinical symptoms and most rabbits survive. The RHDV2 is less virulent than the original strain and has a lower and variable mortality rate.

Who can RHD be diagnosed?

The diagnosis of RHD is usually made at **post mortem examination** and acute hepatic necrosis is a common finding. BattLab offers a **PCR test**, followed by sequencing, can discriminate between classical (RHDV1) and type 2 genotypes. The sample of choice for the diagnostic PCR is liver, since it is the organ containing the higher vial titer. We recommend submission of fresh or frozen tissue collected at post mortem, since formalin fixed tissues are not suitable for this test. Alternatively, other organs (e.g. spleen, peripheral blood, urine) may also contain variable levels of virus which can be detected by PCR.

Internal updates

According to our internal data (Laboklin), 146 UK rabbits were tested in the period between January 2015 and February 2017. None of these were positive for RHDV1, whilst RHDV2 was identified in 24 animals (16.4%). Samples received varied and included fresh liver (from dead animals), spleen, peripheral blood and conjunctival swabs.

In addition to PCR for RHD, BattLab offers a **wide variety of testing for rabbits** and all small mammals, from haematology and biochemistry, to serology, endocrinology and various PCR testing. Do not hesitate to contact us if you need further information or if you want to receive copy of our catalogue.

NON-HAEMOTROPIC MYCOPLASMA

Mycoplasmas are the smallest free-living organisms capable of self-replication. Although capable of an extracellular existence, they have very small genomes which restricts metabolic capacity. Therefore, Mycoplasmas depend on a rich environment for nourishment, which they find on mucosal surfaces of the respiratory and urogenital tracts of their hosts. Mycoplasma organisms are most notably associated with ocular, urogenital and respiratory tract infections. There has been much debate as to whether Mycoplasma species are primary or secondary opportunists of the lower respiratory tract. It is now accepted that they are normal flora of the upper airways but it is possible Mycoplasma organisms may descend to the lower airways following immunosuppression or predisposing infection (eg. Kennel cough, viral infection, etc).

Clinical findings associated with Mycoplasma associated respiratory disease are non-specific but may include productive coughing, pyrexia, mild pleural effusion, alveolar and bronchointerstitial pulmonary densities and enlarged mediastinal lymph nodes.

Due to their need for specific growth conditions, routine culture of Mycoplasma species is infrequently performed and often limited to specialized laboratories. Although Mycoplasma organisms can be tentatively diagnosed from a variety of cytology samples (eg. conjunctival scrapings, synovial fluid, transtracheal wash and bronchoalveolar lavage samples), **molecular techniques (PCR)** are commonly employed for definitive identification. Our **canine and feline Large Respiratory and Reproductive PCR Profiles** offer a thorough and easy option to help aid in the diagnosis of underlying respiratory and reproductive infections.

60 SECONDS WITH… PATRICIA O'REILLY

This month we hear from Patricia O'Reilly, technician at Batt Lab.

How long have you been at BattLab?
I have worked in Battlab for just over a month

Why do you do what you do?
I have always been crazy about animals! For as long as I can remember I've wanted to work in a job that helps animals, so when a job became available at Battlab, I jumped at the opportunity. I've always volunteered at animal shelters and veterinary hospitals, so working at Battlab and having the opportunity to help animals is a dream come true.

What do you do enjoy in your spare time?

I love outdoor adventure sport! When I lived in Ireland I did a lot of surfing and some kayaking. Since I've moved to the UK, I've taken advantage of the amazing hiking trails in the Peak District. I used to play Polocrosse competitively, which is definitely a thrill! Reading and playing computer games are other ways I like to spend my free time too.

We greet and wait for contact.
Yours sincerely,
The BattLab team

024 7632 3275 **www.battlab.com**

Message sent by: Batt Laboratories Ltd,
University of Warwick Science Park, The Venture Centre, Sir William Lyons Road, Coventry CV4 7EZ
E-mail: admin@battlab.com