



Avian bornavirus and proventricular dilation disease

Davor Ojkic, DVM, PhD

Background

Recent findings suggest association of avian bornavirus (ABV) infection with proventricular dilation disease (PDD) of parrots. Previously, the diagnosis of PDD could only be confirmed postmortem, and there was no simple way to test living birds. It appears that some parrots are 'carriers' of the disease or chronically infected and do not show overt clinical signs, but can 'shed' the virus to other birds that may become seriously ill. A PCR screening test that detects ABV genetic material is available at the Animal Health Laboratory.

Sample collection and transport

- Collect cloacal or choanal swabs (combined cloacal/choanal swabs are acceptable) in **virus transport medium**. Use virus collection and transport systems such as "Multitrans Collection and Transportation System" from Starplex (VWR Cat # CA73270-008) or "Universal Viral Transport Collection Kit" from Becton-Dickinson (Fisher Cat# B220531), or equivalent. For convenience AHL has virus collection and transport systems available - please contact AHL at 519-824-4120, ext. 54530 or ahlinfo@uoguelph.ca and we will send them to you.
- Tissue samples collected as a part of postmortem procedures can also be used for PCR testing.
- We recommend testing of individual birds.
- Please do not send feces, blood, serum or plasma.
- If samples can reach the lab within 24-48 hours, ship samples chilled (on ice packs) to the lab, otherwise freeze and send later.
- Please note that shedding may be intermittent, so repeated testing will increase the confidence in a negative status.

For submission forms and shipping instructions, please see the AHL website:

www.ahl.uoguelph.ca.