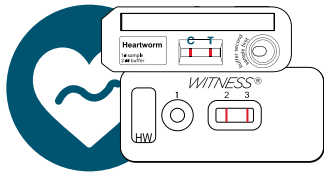


# Positive Feline Heartworm Test What Happens Next?

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**Prior to placing on HW preventatives\*† or suspected infection to establish HW infection status**

**TEST & EVALUATE**

Perform in-clinic (VETSCAN Heartworm/WITNESS FFH/WITNESS Heartworm) or reference lab antigen HW test and an antibody test

**ANTIGEN POSITIVE  
ANTIBODY POSITIVE,  
NEGATIVE, OR  
NOT PERFORMED**

**PREVENT & MONITOR**

**ADULT HEARTWORM INFECTION  
HIGHLY LIKELY**  
Start preventative‡  
Perform 3-view thoracic radiographs, ± echo  
Symptomatic treatment as needed  
(adulticide treatment not recommended)  
Cat owner education on clinical signs

**ANTIGEN NEGATIVE  
ANTIBODY POSITIVE**

**PREVENT & EVALUATE**

**CAT EXPOSED: CURRENT OR RISK OF  
HARD +/- ADULT HEARTWORM INFECTION  
+/- PREVIOUS INFECTION**  
Start preventative‡  
Repeat antigen test immediately +/- in 1-2 months  
Consider using a different test brand or reference  
lab testing (DiroCHEK +/- heat treatment)  
Consider baseline thoracic radiography,  
echocardiography, esp. if respiratory signs

**ANTIGEN NEGATIVE ANTIBODY  
NEGATIVE**

**PREVENT**

**HEARTWORM INFECTION  
LESS LIKELY**  
Start preventative‡  
If no history of preventative, repeat  
antibody and antigen test in 1-2 months  
Consider imaging studies if clinical signs  
of lower respiratory disease

**Echocardiography  
± repeat antigen test  
POSITIVE**

**PREVENT & MONITOR**

**ADULT HEARTWORM  
INFECTION PRESENT**  
Supportive/symptomatic treatment as needed  
Cat owner education on clinical signs

**Thoracic radiographs:  
Pulmonary vascular/interstitial  
pattern**

**PREVENT & MONITOR**

**PRESUMPTIVE DIAGNOSIS OF  
HARD, MATURE HEARTWORM  
INFECTION POSSIBLE**  
Supportive/symptomatic  
treatment as needed

**Echocardiography  
and repeat antigen  
test NEGATIVE**

**PREVENT & MONITOR**

**CAT EXPOSED, ADULT HEARTWORM  
INFECTION UNLIKELY**  
Supportive/symptomatic  
treatment as needed

Note: In the cat, no single test will detect all heartworm cases. The clinician must use a combination of test results to determine the likelihood of heartworm disease as the etiology of the cat's symptoms.‡

HW = Heartworm  
HARD = Heartworm-associated respiratory disease  
\*CAPC recommendation  
†Certain products have a caution for use in HW+ cats

‡ American Heartworm Society. Current Feline Guidelines for the Prevention, Diagnosis and Management of Heartworm (Dirofilaria immitis) Infection in Cats (2020). <https://www.heartwormsociety.org/veterinary-resources/american-heartworm-society-guidelines>

