

Malignant Catarrhal Fever

Striking domestic and wild herds across the globe

An infectious systemic disease, Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF) affects ruminants, from cattle and bison to farmed hoofstock, like deer. Both the Texas livestock industry and exotic animal producers should be aware of MCF, its clinical signs and methods for diagnosing the disease.

TVMDL diagnoses cases of MCF virus using histopathology and a rtPCR test. When necessary, additional testing is performed as needed. During necropsy, if MCF-suspect lesions are identified, they are confirmed with one of the previously mentioned tests.

Worldwide, cases of MCF have been diagnosed in white-tailed deer, antelope species, exotic hoofstock, sheep, goats, bison, and cattle. Clinical signs of MCF include fever, nasal discharge, ocular discharge, edema or corneal opacity, diarrhea, dermatitis, oral erosions, among other signs.

Diagnostic testing, specifically rtPCR, can definitively identify which strain of the MCF herpesvirus is affecting an animal. The following virus strains are associated with MCF:

- Alcephaline herpesvirus-1 in wildebeest
- Ovine herpesvirus-2 in sheep
- Caprine Herpesvirus-2 is endemic in domestic goats
- MCF-WTD (white tailed deer)
- MCF-Ibex – associated with Nubian Ibex

Diagnosing MCF is key to reducing the risk of further cases. TVMDL's rtPCR test can distinguish between the ovine, Ibex, white-tailed deer, caprine and alcelaphine herpesvirus-1 strains of MCF.

Malignant Catarrhal Fever (rtPCR)

Specimen: One or more of the following: 1.0g fresh tissue (lymph node, liver, spleen, kidney, lung), 1-2mL whole blood

Species: Bovine, Caprine, Ovine, Cervid, Exotic

Turnaround: This test is performed at the Amarillo laboratory Monday through Friday and the College Station laboratory Tuesday through Friday with results within 1 to 4 business days.

Visit tvmdl.tamu.edu to view current test prices.

