

Feline Genetic Research Projects

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Instructions for Collecting Feline Buccal (cheek) Cells for DNA

If you are participating in a feline diversity research project or Breed Management Plan, please collect cats that are contributing to your breeding program that are as unrelated as possible. Only one or a few cats from each cattery are necessary.

If you are participating in a specific gene hunting project (coat colors, fur types, or diseases) please collect as many direct relatives to the cat(s) of interest (parents, sibs, and grandparents). Send swabs to other owners who may like to participate. Even if you can't find the relatives, please always send samples as many projects can move forward with just the affected and some normal cats.

1. Before collecting sample, make sure that the cat has not nursed or had anything to eat or drink 10 – 15 minutes prior to collecting the sample.
2. Sample one cat at a time. If samples are to be collected from several cats in the same session, complete steps 1 - 6 for one cat before sampling the next.
3. Provide a pedigree for each cat and your contact information (business card). The pedigree does not have to be official. Please comment on interesting traits found in the cat or any health concerns on the pedigree or in a separate letter. You can also use the Submission Form to provide information as well.
4. Use 2 double-ended cotton swabs or 4 cytological brushes (4 total samples per cat). Place swab head against the inside of the cheek and gums under the whisker pad, not towards the back of the mouth. Swirl vigorously 8 – 10 times. Use both ends of the cotton swabs.

(The cat's mouth should not bleed, do not press very hard, but make good contact with the cheek and gums. If the cat will not allow a long contact, most samples will still have DNA is swabbing is done for only a couple of times)

5. Wave cotton swab or brush in the air for 20 seconds to air dry.
6. Place swabs into a paper envelope and seal. Write the cat's name on the outside of each sealed envelope, matching the pedigree name. Do not wrap swabs in plastic wrap or seal in plastic bag
7. Sample one cat at a time. If you are sampling several cats in the same session, complete the process for one cat before sampling the next.
8. If a cytological brush - open the wrapper at one end and remove the brush by its handle. Place bristle head against the inside of the cheek and swirl 10 times. Please be vigorous, as this is the only sample we will have for this cat.
9. Carefully return swab to its envelope, holding it open so that the bristles do not spray.
10. Fold open end of wrapper and seal with a paperclip or tape.
11. Return all samples and the Submission form via mail to the address above.