

А.Ю. Команова

И.А. Синицына

С.Н. Чижикова

АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК ДЛЯ ВЕТЕРИНАРНО-САНИТАРНОЙ ЭКСПЕРТИЗЫ. ГАЗЕТНЫЕ ТЕКСТЫ С ЗАДАНИЯМИ

Учебное пособие





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А.Ю. Команова

И.А. Сеницына

С.Н. Чижикова

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ЭКСПЕРТИЗЫ.
ГАЗЕТНЫЕ ТЕКСТЫ С ЗАДАНИЯМИ
УЧЕБНОЕ ПОСОБИЕ**

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К63

Рецензенты:

И.В. Кулачихина, канд. пед. наук, доцент кафедры иностранных языков
(ФГБОУ ВО «Омский государственный аграрный университет
имени П.А. Столыпина»);

Алипчиев А.Ю., канд. пед. наук, доцент кафедры иностранных и русского языков
(ФГБОУ ВО РГАУ-МСХА имени К.А. Тимирязева).

Команова А.Ю., Сеницына И.А., Чижикова С.Н.

К63 Английский язык для ветеринарно-санитарной экспертизы. Газетные
тексты с заданиями: учебное пособие. – Москва: МЭСХ, 2026. – 64 с.
ISBN 978-5-6053447-5-9

Цель пособия – формирование и развитие у обучающихся практических навыков и умений, необходимых для чтения специализированной литературы, устного и письменного общения в сфере профессиональной коммуникации на английском языке. Акцент сделан на изучении лексики и коммуникативном компоненте владения языком.

В издании, подготовленном в соответствии с Федеральным государственным образовательным стандартом, учтены особенности преподавания иностранного языка в неязыковых вузах. Может служить самостоятельным пособием для групп с уровнем владения языком А2-B1.

Предназначено для студентов, обучающихся по ФГОС ВО по направлениям подготовки 36.03.01, 36.04.01 «Ветеринарно-санитарная экспертиза», 36.05.01 «Ветеринария».

Рекомендовано к изданию учебно-методической комиссией института зоотехнии и биологии (протокол № 15 от 15 мая 2026 г.).

Komanova A. Yu., Sinitsyna I.A., Chizhikova S.N. English for veterinary and sanitary examination. Newspaper texts with tasks: textbook. – Moscow: MESKH, 2026. – 64 p.

The purpose of the manual is to form and develop students' practical skills and abilities necessary for reading specialized literature, oral and written communication in the field of professional communication in English. The emphasis is on vocabulary learning and the communicative component of language proficiency.

The publication, prepared in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard, takes into account the features of teaching a foreign language in non-linguistic universities. Can serve as a standalone guide for groups with language proficiency level A2-B1.

It is intended for students studying under the Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education in the areas of training 36.03.01, 36.04.01 “Veterinary and Sanitary Expertise”, 36.05.01 “Veterinary Medicine”.

ISBN 978-5-6053447-5-9

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INTRODUCTION

Введение

Современное профессиональное образование в сфере ветеринарно-санитарной экспертизы требует не только фундаментальных знаний в ветеринарии, эпизоотологии и гигиене, но и сформированных коммуникативных компетенций на иностранном языке.

Данное пособие разработано для студентов бакалавриата по направлению подготовки бакалавриата 36.03.01 «Ветеринарно-санитарная экспертиза», магистратуры 36.04.01 «Ветеринарно-санитарная экспертиза», специалитета 36.05.01 «Ветеринария». Его цель – формирование профессионально значимой языковой компетенции, позволяющей осуществлять коммуникацию на английском языке для работы с аутентичными текстами, непосредственно связанными с практикой ветеринарии. В данном пособии представлены описания инфекционных и неинфекционных заболеваний животных, клинические картины и современные подходы к лечению и профилактике. Выбор материалов воспроизводит ту информационную иноязычную среду, которой могут пользоваться выпускники, а именно аутентичные британские СМИ, специализирующиеся на проблемах современной ветеринарно-санитарной экспертизы.

Методологическая основа данного пособия сочетает коммуникативный и предметно-ориентированный подходы. Каждая тематическая единица включает:

- предтекстовое коммуникативное задание;
- аутентичный текст на английском языке, отобранный из публикаций на онлайн-ресурсах британских изданий Daily Mail, The Guardian, The Independent последних лет;
- лексические упражнения, направленные на закрепление профессиональной лексики и языковых моделей;
- задания на понимание текста (общий и детальный контроль понимания);
- коммуникативные упражнения, имитирующие профессиональные ситуации.

Особое внимание уделено терминологической точности и навыкам критического чтения.

Предполагается, что систематическая работа с данным пособием будет способствовать:

- формированию устойчивого запаса профессиональной лексики и устойчивых словосочетаний;

- повышению скорости и качества чтения англоязычных профессиональных текстов;
- развитию умений ясно излагать результаты обследований и рекомендации на английском языке;
- готовности к профессиональной коммуникации в многонациональной среде и участию в международных научно-практических коммуникациях.

Данное пособие предназначено для использования в рамках как аудиторных занятий, так и для самостоятельной работы обучающихся. Преподавателям рекомендуется адаптировать задания в соответствии с уровнем подготовки группы и спецификой образовательного процесса; студентам рекомендуется работать с материалом последовательно, уделяя внимание как смысловому пониманию содержания, так и языковому оформлению профессиональных высказываний.

TEXT 1

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

1) What do you know about bird flu (avian influenza)? Have you heard about cases of bird flu in Russia or in other countries?

2) Why is it dangerous when a virus jumps from birds to other animals or to humans? What problems can this create for farmers and for people's health?

3) If there is a new dangerous disease in animals, what should the government do?

Government on high alert as deadly bird flu jumps species again – after first human death in us

By Emma Nelson, health reporter and John Ely, deputy health editor

Published: 24 march 2025

Experts have issued a stark warning after the world's first case of bird flu in sheep was detected on the UK farm, triggering a Government alert.

The case was identified in Yorkshire during routine surveillance on a premises where avian influenza had been confirmed in captive birds.

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs¹ confirmed that the infected sheep has been “humanely culled” to enable extensive testing.

Bird flu can cause severe illness, including pneumonia, and even death – with experts on high alert amid fears it could trigger a human pandemic.

The new report will further raise concerns after the UK's first human case of the infection, also known as H5N1, was recorded in January.

Commenting on the incident, Professor Ed Hutchinson, a virologist at the University of Glasgow Centre, said a “particularly aggressive strain” of the virus was to blame.

“H5N1 avian influenza virus has spread through bird populations across the world,” he added. “On the way, it has caused repeated “spillover” infections of mammals: mammals that wouldn't normally get avian influenza have caught the disease from birds. In March last year, the US Centers for Disease Control² recorded the first cases of H5N1 in dairy cows, and the virus has continued to spread among cattle – something Prof Hutchinson called “surprising.”

He added: “Another animal we hadn't previously thought of as a host is sheep, which makes this announcement of H5N1 influenza in a single sheep in Yorkshire startling.”

The sheep in question was reportedly on a farm where bird flu was also present in captive birds.

¹ Министерство окружающей среды, продовольствия и сельского хозяйства.

² Центры по контролю и профилактике заболеваний США.

Said Prof Hutchinson: “In terms of direct risk to humans, we know from the dairy outbreak in the USA that H5N1 in milk is a possible source of human infection. H5N1 can cause severe illness in humans and it is important to minimise the risk of farmed animals infecting them, although so far in the USA human cases of H5N1 contracted from cows in dairies have typically been quite mild. There is also a risk of H5N1 “breeding” with human strains of influenza to produce a new human influenza virus. There is no evidence that this has happened anywhere with an H5N1 virus, but it is important that we work hard to keep that risk as low as possible.”

Daily Mail: Интернет-ресурс. – URL: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-14530151/government-high-alert-bird-flu-warning-death-sheep.html> (дата обращения: 19.04.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words according to the following definitions:

- 1) systematic monitoring and testing of animals or premises to detect, track and control diseases early
- 2) relating to birds
- 3) kept in confinement or under human control
- 4) a scientist who specialises in the study of viruses
- 5) a specific genetic variant or subtype of a virus
- 6) the transmission of a pathogen (such as a virus) from its usual animal reservoir to a new host species that would not normally be infected
- 7) the sudden occurrence of cases of a disease in excess of what is normally expected

Task 2. Match nouns to adjectives to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. avian | a) birds |
| 2. captive | b) infections |
| 3. dairy | c) testing |
| 4. spillover | d) influenza |
| 5. human | e) surveillance |
| 6. routine | f) pandemic |
| 7. extensive | g) cows |

Task 3. Place the collocations from Exercise 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 was confirmed in _____ at a premises near Grassington, North Yorkshire.
- 2) Experts have issued a stark warning after the world’s first case of bird flu in sheep was detected, triggering fears it could lead to a _____.

3) The infected sheep has been humanely culled to enable _____ and further analysis of the virus.

4) H5N1 avian influenza virus has spread through bird populations and has caused repeated _____ of mammals that wouldn't normally get avian influenza.

5) A newer variant of the virus has spilled over into _____ separately in several US states, prompting new concerns about spread.

6) The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs confirmed the detection during _____ on the farm where the disease was already present in captive birds.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct verb-noun collocations. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

keep the risk low, produce a new virus, trigger a human pandemic, raise concerns

1) Experts fear that the virus jumping from animals to humans could _____ if it mutates further.

2) The detection of H5N1 in a sheep has _____ among scientists about the possibility of wider spread to farmed mammals.

3) There is a theoretical risk that H5N1 could _____ by combining with existing human influenza strains.

4) Professor Hutchinson emphasised that it is important to minimise contact between infected animals and people in order to _____ of a new pandemic strain emerging.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can heck the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

case of flu ____ sheep; spread ____ bird populations ____ the world; the virus has continued to spread ____ cattle; catch the disease ____ birds; cause severe illness ____ humans

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

1) The first case of bird flu in a sheep was detected during an emergency inspection on a UK farm.

2) The infected sheep was humanely culled so that scientists could carry out more tests.

3) The H5N1 virus found in the sheep is the same aggressive strain that has been spreading in dairy cows in the USA.

4) Human cases of H5N1 contracted from dairy cows in the USA have all been severe.

5) There is already clear evidence that H5N1 has combined with human flu strains to create a new pandemic virus.

Task 7. Answer the questions:

1) Where and how was the world's first case of bird flu in a sheep discovered?

2) Why was the infected sheep culled?

3) According to Professor Ed Hutchinson, what makes the case in the sheep “startling”?

4) What two possible risks to humans from H5N1 in farmed animals does the professor mention?

5) What does Professor Hutchinson recommend to reduce the danger of a new human influenza virus emerging?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5 – 7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1) How real is the risk of H5N1 triggering a human pandemic?

2) The role of routine surveillance in controlling avian influenza outbreaks.

TEXT 2

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) If horse races are cancelled for a few days, how could this affect people who work at the racecourse?
- 2) What are two reasons why horses get vaccines?
- 3) Imagine you are organising a race and one horse might be sick. What two things would you do first to protect the other horses and people?

Equine Flu Crisis: Biggest Shutdown Since Foot and Mouth Hits Horse Racing

By Greg Wood, the Guardian's racing correspondent.

Published: 7 February 2019

All race meetings in Britain have been cancelled until next Wednesday at the earliest while the sport's governing body awaits test results from more than 100 stables that could have been exposed to equine influenza.

Donald McCain's yard in Cheshire, where three cases of equine influenza in vaccinated horses were confirmed on Wednesday evening, sent a single runner to meetings in Ayr and Ludlow earlier that day, potentially exposing many more horses to the disease.

The cancellations, ordered by the British Horseracing Authority, will cost the industry tens of millions of pounds and is the biggest loss of fixtures for reasons other than freezing weather since the foot and mouth outbreak of 2001.

Equine influenza is endemic in Britain's horse population, but vaccination against the disease is mandatory for thoroughbreds and most other breeds that are used competitively, such as eventers. As a result, outbreaks are extremely rare, but the fact that all three of the horses affected at McCain's stable had been vaccinated prompted immediate concern that a new strain of the disease could spread rapidly through the racing industry.

Equine influenza causes similar symptoms in horses to those suffered by humans; including fever, nasal discharge and a harsh, dry cough. It is rarely fatal, though it can lead to complications including pneumonia and some horses can take several weeks, or even months, to recover fully from an infection.

As a result, an epidemic has the potential to cause massive disruption to a country's racing programme or even shut it down altogether. An outbreak in New South Wales in 2007 resulted in the closure of Sydney's racetracks from late August until early December, although this was in an unvaccinated racehorse population.

Since the incubation period for equine influenza can be up to 72 hours, samples will be taken on Friday from horses that raced at Ayr and Ludlow and sent to the Animal Health Trust in Newmarket for analysis. The BHA said on Thursday evening that its veterinary team "has been in contact with more than 50 trainers and

veterinarians to allow it to make an informed assessment of the risk of equine influenza spreading”.

The BHA added: “While no further positive tests have been received, at least three more days are required before it will be possible to make a decision about whether it is safe to resume racing. The disease can take up to three days before symptoms are visible, meaning it will take until Sunday at the earliest before the BHA can gather all the information required.”

McCain said: “We are scrupulous about observing the health status of horses in our care and taking the necessary steps to treat any condition that may affect them. It follows we would never race any horses that we could have known were infected.

Over the last two months, all potential runners have been scoped and their blood checked within 36 hours of their races to ensure that only healthy horses compete for the yard. When new horses arrive at our yard we try as much as possible to keep them separate, but at this stage cannot know if the infection came from recent arrivals or from horses returning from racing. We have three confirmed cases and this morning have taken blood and swabs from all the others for testing.”

*The Guardian: интернет-ресурс. – URL:
<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2019/feb/07/equine-flu-crisis-biggest-shutdown-foot-and-mouth-hits-horse-racing> (дата обращения: 18.05.2026)*

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

- 1) A contagious viral disease that affects horses and causes fever, coughing, and nasal discharge.
- 2) Protected by a vaccine, which helps the body resist a particular disease.
- 3) Required by rules, law, or official regulations.
- 4) Regularly found in a particular area or among a particular group of animals or people.
- 5) The time between infection and the appearance of symptoms.
Measures taken to prevent the spread of disease among animals, plants, or people.
- 6) A serious lung infection that can develop as a complication of another illness.
- 7) Additional medical problems that appear as a result of a disease or condition.

Task 2. Match nouns to adjectives to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. equine | a) horses |
| 2. mandatory | b) influenza |
| 3. vaccinated | c) cases |
| 4. harsh | d) cough |

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 5. potential | e) team |
| 6. veterinary | f) exposure |
| 7. confirmed | g) vaccination |
| 8. ailing | h) industry |

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) The outbreak caused serious problems for the _____.
- 2) The yard reported several _____ that still became sick.
- 3) The _____ was called immediately to examine the horses.
- 4) The horse was diagnosed with _____ after showing clear signs of illness.
- 5) The authorities _____ several _____ of the disease.
- 6) One of the main symptoms was a _____ that made breathing difficult.
- 7) The stable was closed because of the _____ of many other animals.
- 8) In this sport, _____ is required for all competing horses.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct collocations above. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

Recover fully from an infection, Shut it down altogether, Spread rapidly through the racing industry, Scope all potential runners, Lead to complications.

- 1) If not contained promptly, the infection may _____, creating significant operational disruption.
- 2) Equine influenza can _____, including respiratory inflammation and pneumonia.
- 3) Trainers should _____ before competition in order to identify any signs of illness.
- 4) Even after symptoms subside, some horses may require a prolonged period to _____.
- 5) In the event of a severe outbreak, the authorities may be forced to _____.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can check the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

- 1) awaits test results ____ more than 100 stables
- 2) vaccination ____ the disease
- 3) could spread rapidly ____ the racing industry
- 4) causes similar symptoms ____ horses
- 5) resulted ____ the closure of Sydney's racetracks
- 6) incubation period ____ equine influenza can be ____ to 72 hours

- 7) can take up to three days _____ symptoms are visible
- 8) taken blood and swabs _____ all the others for testing

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

- 1) All race meetings in Britain were cancelled until next Wednesday at the earliest because of confirmed cases of equine influenza at Donald McCain's yard.
- 2) Equine influenza is a rare disease in Britain because vaccination against it is mandatory for thoroughbreds and most competitive horses.
- 3) The outbreak of equine influenza in New South Wales in 2007 occurred in a vaccinated racehorse population.
- 4) The BHA stated that no positive tests for equine influenza had been received after the three initial cases at McCain's yard.
- 5) Donald McCain claimed that his yard never races any horses that are sick or might be infected, even though some horses travel between yards and races.

Task 7. Answer the questions:

- 1) Why have all race meetings in Britain been cancelled until at least next Wednesday?
- 2) What made the discovery of equine influenza in three vaccinated horses at Donald McCain's yard particularly alarming?
- 3) How could horses that raced at Ayr and Ludlow be linked to the possible spread of the disease?
- 4) What is equine influenza, and why is it a serious threat to the racing industry despite being rarely fatal?
- 5) What steps are the British Horseracing Authority and McCain's yard taking to assess the risk and prevent further spread of the virus?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

- 1) The economic and social impact of equine influenza on the horse-racing industry. Discuss how an outbreak of equine influenza can lead to mass cancellations of race meetings, quarantine of horses, and the isolation of entire yards. Analyse the consequences for racecourse businesses, trainers, jockeys, and support staff, many of whom depend on daily income from race days. Examine the psychological stress

on owners and trainers when healthy-looking, vaccinated horses suddenly become infected, and how this affects public trust in the sport.

2) Mandatory vaccination policies for animals and their social consequences.

Discuss how mandatory vaccination programmes for livestock and racehorses aim to prevent diseases such as foot and mouth disease and equine influenza, yet can still fail when new strains appear or vaccination coverage is incomplete. Analyse the economic consequences for farmers and owners when outbreaks occur despite vaccination, including export bans, loss of income, and the need for mass culling. Examine the social consequences: how such policies can create tension between state authorities, farmers, and animal-welfare groups, as well as the psychological burden on families who see their animals destroyed.

TEXT 3

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What do you think "Foot and mouth disease" is? Is it a problem for people or for animals?
- 2) What does the phrase "body blow" mean in this context?
- 3) Based on the title, what do you think the article will be about? What kind of problems will it discuss?

Pig farmers penned in (foot-and-mouth disease)

By Derek Brown, a "brilliant" and long-serving foreign correspondent, reporter, and editor for The Guardian.

Published: 21 February 2001

Foot and mouth disease is the latest body blow to an industry already reeling from senseless economic pressures, says Derek Brown.

For more than a decade, Britain's battered livestock industries have been swirling in a turgid sea of grim initials.

First it was BSE and the ghastly phenomenon of mad cows. Then came the passionate debate over GM food – genetically modified for beasts to eat, as well as humans. Last year brought CSF, the horrible classical swine fever. Now there is FMD, the worst of the lot.

Foot and mouth disease spreads with deadly speed. It affects pigs, sheep, goats and cattle. The only way to deal with it is by the most drastic of scorched-earth campaigns. The last big outbreak, in 1967-68, saw the slaughter of nearly 450,000 animals.

For big breeders in particular, the FMD outbreak could not have been worse timed. Their industry has been hammered by tough new animal welfare regulation, by supermarket demands for GM feeds to be eliminated and by a flood of cheap imports, notably from Denmark and the Netherlands.

In spite of all that, market prices for home-produced pork and bacon have risen smartly in recent weeks. Blue sky was reappearing over the pig business. Now the darkest cloud envelopes it again.

Little wonder then about the shrieks of outrage coming from the industry. Digby Scott, commenting today on the estimable national pig association website, puts down the FMD outbreak to "supermarket greed and the drive for globalisation at all costs which has turned this country into a cesspit for the world's cheapest meat and meat products".

He has a point. The vast bulk of food consumed in Britain – imported or otherwise – is transported ridiculous distances to reach the supermarket shelves. It has to be collected, processed, labelled, wrapped, stored and distributed. Even small

farmers who want to market meat products locally, are increasingly forced to send their animals many miles to the nearest abattoir – and then bring it back again.

This article is being written in Oxfordshire. In the whole county, just one slaughterhouse has survived the torrent of British and EU hygiene regulation. In our small market town, remarkably, we have two traditional butchers, both offering high quality and value. But the pressure on prices is remorseless: one of the butchers buys in Danish pork, to compete with the supermarkets.

No wonder that the thriving outdoor pig farms around about the town have dwindled and, in at least one case, gone out of production altogether. Now the remaining producers have to live with the grisly fear of a disease for which there is no answer save wholesale slaughter.

The Guardian: интернет-ресурс. – URL:

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2001/feb/21/food,foodanddrink1> (дата обращения: 28.04.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

- 1) A highly contagious viral disease of cloven-hoofed animals, causing blisters and often leading to mass slaughter.
- 2) A fatal neurodegenerative disease in cattle, known as «mad cow disease».
- 3) Food from organisms with genetically altered material.
- 4) A highly contagious viral disease of pigs, also called hog cholera.
- 5) Laws ensuring humane treatment and well-being of animals.
- 6) A facility where animals are slaughtered for meat.
- 7) Rules ensuring cleanliness and disease prevention in food production and animal handling.
- 8) Farms where pigs are raised outdoors or free-range, not confined indoors.

Task 2. Match adjectives to nouns to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. foot and mouth | a) fever |
| 2. ghastly | b) food |
| 3. genetically modified | c) disease |
| 4. classical swine | d) regulation |
| 5. deadly | e) imports |
| 6. tough new | f) fear |
| 7. cheap | g) speed |
| 8. grisly | h) phenomenon |

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) _____ spreads with deadly speed.
- 2) First it was BSE and the _____ of mad cows.

3) Then came the passionate debate over GM food – _____ for beasts to eat, as well as humans.

4) Last year brought CSF, the horrible _____.

5) Foot and mouth disease spreads with _____.

6) Now the remaining producers have to live with the _____ of a disease.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct verb-noun collocations above. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

have to live with the grisly fear of a disease, see the slaughter, affect pigs, spread with deadly speed, hammer by tough new animal welfare regulation

1) Foot and mouth disease _____.

2) It _____, sheep, goats and cattle.

3) The last big outbreak, in 1967-68, _____ of nearly 450,000 animals.

4) Their industry _____, by supermarket demands for GM feeds to be eliminated and by a flood of cheap imports, notably from Denmark and the Netherlands.

5) Now the remaining producers _____ for which there is no answer save wholesale slaughter.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can heck the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

1) reeling ____ senseless economic pressures

2) swirling ____ a turgid sea

3) genetically modified ____ beasts to eat

4) hammered ____ tough new animal welfare regulation

5) coming ____ the industry

6) puts down the FMD outbreak ____ "supermarket greed"

7) transported ridiculous distances ____ reach the supermarket shelves

8) written ____ Oxfordshire

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

1) Foot and mouth disease affects only pigs.

2) The 1967–68 outbreak of FMD led to the slaughter of nearly half a million animals.

3) The pig industry has been suffering from cheap imports, mainly from France and Spain.

4) In Oxfordshire, there are many slaughterhouses that survived EU hygiene regulations.

5) The article claims that supermarkets are the main reason for the FMD outbreak.

Task 7. Answer the questions:

1) Which animals are affected by foot and mouth disease, according to the text?

2) What was the scale of animal slaughter during the last big FMD outbreak in 1967–68?

3) What economic and regulatory factors have recently hit the pig breeding industry?

4) Why do small farmers have to send their animals long distances, according to the article?

5) What is the current situation with outdoor pig farms near the town described in the article?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1. The economic and social impact of foot and mouth disease on rural communities. Discuss how the outbreak of the disease leads to mass slaughter of livestock, export bans and the collapse of farmers' incomes. Analyse the consequences for rural employment, the social structure of villages and the psychological stress on farming families. Use examples from the UK, the Netherlands and developing countries to show the scale of the crisis.

2. The role of government regulation and supermarket pressure in the decline of local farming. Examine how strict hygiene and animal welfare standards, while important for safety, increase costs for small producers and favour large industrial farms. Analyse how the pricing and sourcing policies of supermarkets put pressure on local farmers, forcing them to cut costs or leave the market. Illustrate your talk with cases from the UK, Germany and the USA.

TEXT 4

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What do you know about bluetongue disease (bluetongue virus)? Have you heard about this disease in animals? What animals does it affect?
- 2) How can viruses and diseases spread between countries?
- 3) What problems can appear if a new dangerous animal disease comes to a country? What should farmers and the government do to protect animals?

Urgent warning over bluetongue virus: Millions of farm animals are at risk of deadly disease carried to Britain from Europe by midges

By Jonathan Chadwick, assistant science & technology editor

Published: 7 May 2024

Government experts have issued an urgent warning over a deadly disease that could kill millions of farm animals in Britain.

Bluetongue disease – caused by a virus spread by flying insects called midges – mostly affects sheep and cattle, but also goats, deer and even camel. Infected animals can get swelling of the tongue (“bluetongue”) which can cause breathing difficulties, but other symptoms include lesions and nasal discharge.

Bluetongue disease was first reported in the UK in 2007, but now government says there's a “very high probability” of a new strain of the virus called BTV-3 spreading across Britain.

Already there have been confirmed cases of BTV-3 in sheep and cattle in Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Bluetongue does not pose a threat to human health or food safety. Instead, the danger is the threat to livestock that could be slaughtered in places where infection is confirmed.

In a statement, the government said the new strain will likely infect more British farm animals due to infected biting midges being blown over from northern Europe.

These biting midges are most active between April and November but a potential “incursion” of the flying insects will depend on temperature and wind patterns. Because the midges thrive in warmer temperatures, the risk of virus transmission is expected to increase in hotter weather.

Counties along the south and east coasts of England, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent, and Sussex, are considered most likely to be impacted.

“Our robust surveillance systems show we have now entered the period where biting midges are more active,” said Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Christine Middlemiss. “We know that the likelihood of bluetongue virus entering Great Britain is increasing. Despite the increase in midge activity, the current risk of

transmission has not changed, but I would urge farmers to remain vigilant and report any suspicions to the Animal Plant Health Agency.”

Aside from a swollen tongue, symptoms in cattle and sheep include eye and nasal discharge, lesions and redness, drooling as a result of ulcerations in the mouth, swelling of the head and neck, and lameness. The severity of disease varies among different species, but symptoms tend to be the most severe in sheep, resulting in death, weight loss and disruption in wool growth. Cattle (cows and bulls) often have a higher infection rate than sheep and affected cows can suffer from lower milk yield even if they survive.

There are no authorised vaccines available for BTV-3 in the UK or Europe. However, the government is “actively engaging” with vaccine manufacturers on the development of a BTV-3 vaccine for use in the UK.

According to the government, the overall risk of importing livestock infected with the bluetongue virus into Britain is considered to be “very low”.

However, rules on the movement of livestock from regions affected by bluetongue are already in place.

“We must not be complacent to the bluetongue virus risk and the challenge this could pose to our livestock sector,” said Biosecurity Minister Lord Douglas Miller. “We want to ensure our control strategy is proportionate, and we will continue to work with industry to keep them briefed on the latest disease and veterinary assessments. Once the risk of transmission increases, we will also be offering free bluetongue tests to keepers in high-risk counties and we are actively engaging with vaccine manufacturers on the development of a BTV-3 vaccine for use in the UK.”

Daily Mail: Иммунитет-печурц. – URL: <https://www.dailymail.com/sciencetech/article-13391847/bluetongue-virus-animals-deadly-disease.html> (дата обращения: 18.05.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Match the terms with their definitions:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Bluetongue disease | a) The main veterinary expert responsible for animal health in the country |
| 2. Biting midges | b) The amount of milk produced by cows |
| 3. Chief Veterinary Officer | c) A viral disease that causes swelling and blue discoloration of the tongue in animals |
| 4. Surveillance systems | d) Networks and procedures for monitoring and detecting diseases |
| 5. Lameness | e) Farm animals such as sheep, cattle, goats, etc. |
| 6. Nasal discharge | f) Fluid coming out of the nose |
| 7. Milk yield | g) Difficulty walking due to pain or weakness in the legs |
| 8. Livestock | h) A preparation that stimulates immunity against a specific disease |

- 4) The risk of virus *transmission / transport / transfer* increases in warmer weather.
- 5) There are no authorised *vaccines / vaccinations / vacations* for BTV-3 in the UK.
- 6) The government is working on the development of a *BTV-3 vaccine / BTV-3 virus / BTV-3 strain*.
- 7) Infected animals may be *slaughtered / killed / removed* if the disease is confirmed.
- 8) *Weight loss / Weight reduction / Weight decrease* is a common consequence in sheep.

Task 5. Each sentence below contains one incorrect collocation. Write the correct collocation in the space provided.

Example: A *blue tongue* is one of the main signs of the disease. → *swollen tongue*

- 1) Warmer weather increases the risk of *virus transport* from continental Europe. → _____
- 2) Many animals suffer from *face discharge* and drooling. → _____
- 3) The *Chief Veterinary Director* warned farmers about the new strain. → _____
- 4) Cattle usually have a higher *infection level* than sheep. → _____
- 5) The disease has seriously affected the *animal sector*. → _____
- 6) Farmers can request free *bluetongue checks* in high-risk counties. → _____
- 7) Infected cows often experience a decrease in *milk production*. → _____
- 8) The government is focusing on controlling *virus movement*. → _____

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), or False (F). If the statement is false, make it correct.

- 1) Bluetongue disease can be dangerous to human health.
- 2) The new strain mentioned in the text is called BTV-3.
- 3) Bluetongue mainly affects sheep and cattle, but cannot infect goats or deer.
- 4) Biting midges are most active between April and November.
- 5) There are already authorised vaccines for BTV-3 available in the UK.
- 6) Symptoms are usually more severe in sheep than in cattle.
- 7) The government plans to offer free bluetongue tests in high-risk counties.
- 8) The disease was first reported in the UK in 2007.
- 9) Cattle often experience a reduction in milk yield if infected.
- 10) The overall risk of importing infected livestock into Britain is considered very high.

Task 7. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D) for each question.

1. What is the main way the bluetongue virus spreads?

- a) Through direct contact between animals
- b) By flying insects called biting midges
- c) Through contaminated water
- d) By imported vaccines

2. Which areas of England are considered most at risk?

- a) Northern counties
- b) Western counties
- c) South and east coast counties
- d) Only central England

3. What is one common symptom in sheep that can lead to death?

- a) Increased wool growth
- b) Severe weight loss
- c) Higher milk yield
- d) Improved appetite

4. Why is the government contacting vaccine manufacturers?

- a) To export vaccines to Europe
- b) To test vaccines on humans
- c) To destroy existing vaccines
- d) To develop a vaccine for BTV-3

5. According to the Chief Veterinary Officer, what should farmers do?

- a) Ignore the risk because it is low
- b) Sell their animals as quickly as possible
- c) Stop all movement of livestock immediately
- d) Remain vigilant and report suspicions

6. What can happen to infected cows even if they survive?

- a) They may have lower milk yield
- b) They become immune to all diseases
- c) They grow faster
- d) They spread the virus to humans

7. The text suggests that the risk of virus transmission increases when:

- a) The weather is colder
- b) Temperatures are warmer
- c) There is heavy rain
- d) Wind patterns do not change

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. You are a veterinary expert or a government biosecurity officer. Prepare and deliver a short presentation (or write a formal report) about the current Bluetongue disease situation in a country you choose.

1. Introduction (*What is Bluetongue disease and what causes it? Which animals are most affected?*)
2. Current Situation
3. Symptoms (*Describe at least 5 key symptoms in sheep and cattle*)
4. Transmission and Risk Factors (*How is the disease spread? Which areas are at highest risk and why?*)
5. Government Actions and Measures
6. Conclusion (*Why is this disease a serious threat to the livestock sector? Your personal recommendations*)

TEXT 5

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What is a cull? Give at least one reason people might do it.
- 2) What do you know about bovine tuberculosis (bTB)?
- 3) What are some simple steps farmers can take to protect their herds from bTB?

Badger cull may have increased bovine TB risk in neighbouring herds

By Amarion Scarlett-Reid, freelance journalist

Published: September, 2024

England's controversial badger cull may have increased the risk of bovine tuberculosis (bTB) among herds in neighbouring areas, according to new research.

Researchers at the University of Oxford found that although badger culling reduced incidences of tuberculosis in the areas where it took place, in neighbouring areas the risk of the disease in cattle increased by almost a third.

Badger culling has been ongoing in England for several years as part of an effort to eradicate bTB. This disease spreads between cattle or via contaminated equipment, but it can also be spread by infected badgers.

In that time the culls, which were opposed by nature NGOs including the Wildlife Trusts, and also by animal rights campaigners, have killed more than 200,000 badgers – half the badger population of the UK, according to the Badger Trust.

Labour in opposition said they would end the culls, but no announcement has been made since their election.

The Oxford study said the adverse side-effects of badger culling in one area should “represent important considerations for scientists and policy-makers” implementing badger culling strategies.

In the two-part study, researchers re-analysed data from the randomised badger culling trial that took place between 1998 and 2005. The initial study produced data consistent with the RCBT showing beneficial results to cattle in the areas where culling took place.

However, a secondary study using peer-reviewed analyses of the RCBT found a 29 % increased risk of bTB infections in cattle in surrounding areas.

The secondary study aimed to address scientists' concern around the “lack of evidence” supporting the RCBT experiment. It also suggested that irrespective of the statistical methodology used, badger culling during the RCBT was associated with an increased risk of tuberculosis in neighbouring cattle.

Analysis of neighbouring cattle revealed however that the risk of bTB spread among cattle increased only while culling took place. The researchers said this

suggested that “careful consideration” of neighbouring areas was needed when devising culling strategies.

The researchers said: “Based on our comprehensive analyses, we deduce that during the RBCT, irrespective of statistical methodology, proactive culling was associated with a heightened risk – albeit declining with time – of herd breakdowns for cattle residing in areas neighbouring culled areas, compared to cattle populations in areas neighbouring uncultured survey-only areas. The adverse side-effects of proactive culling, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the first proactive cull, represent important considerations for scientists and policy-makers during the design and implementation of any potential badger culling strategy.”

A Defra spokesperson said: “We know the devastating impact that bovine TB has had on farmers, vets and conservationists with thousands of cattle lost to the disease and badgers culled. This government will roll out a TB eradication package including vaccination, herd management and biosecurity measures to meet our objective to get to bovine TB-free status and end the badger cull.”

The Guardian: интернет-ресурс. – URL:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/article/2024/aug/21/badger-cull-may-have-increased-bovine-tb-risk-in-neighbouring-herds-study> (дата обращения: 20.05.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

- 1) A controversial action aimed at reducing the population of a certain animal species.
- 2) A disease that affects cattle and can also be spread by wild animals.
- 3) A scientific investigation involving data collection and analysis.
- 4) The process or act of evaluating or examining data, especially for scientific research.
- 5) A group of animals raised together on a farm.
- 6) Organizations that fight for the protection of wild animals and the environment.
- 7) An unwanted or harmful result that happens in addition to the intended effect.
- 8) The process of putting a plan or strategy into action.

Task 2. Match adjectives to nouns to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| 1. controversial | a) risk |
| 2. neighbouring | b) analyses |
| 3. adverse | c) cull |
| 4. important | d) impact |
| 5. randomized | e) area |
| 6. increased | f) trial |

7. peer-reviewed
8. devastating

- g) side-effect
- h) considerations

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) The study showed that the risk of disease increased significantly in the _____ after the culling was implemented.
- 2) Scientists warned that the _____ of the new medication could include dizziness and nausea, requiring close monitoring of patients.
- 3) When designing wildlife management policies, policymakers must take into account the _____ of ecological balance and public opinion.
- 4) The effectiveness of the vaccine was confirmed through a large, well-controlled _____ involving thousands of participants.
- 5) The analysis revealed an _____ of tuberculosis in cattle living in areas where wild badgers had been culled.
- 6) The conclusions of the study were supported by _____ that examined multiple data sets from different regions.
- 7) The outbreak of the disease had a _____ on local farmers, many of whom lost their entire herds.
- 8) The government's decision to carry out a _____ of badgers sparked widespread protests from environmental groups and animal rights activists.

Task 4. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can heck the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

re-analyse data, support the experiment, increase only while culling took place, represent important considerations, aim to address, to be associated with a heightened risk

- 1) In light of the unexpected results, the research team decided to _____ using more advanced statistical techniques to uncover potential biases that might have influenced the original conclusions.
- 2) Despite ongoing debates within the scientific community, many leading experts continue to _____, arguing that its outcomes could significantly advance our understanding of ecological impacts and disease control strategies.
- 3) The incidence of the disease _____, suggesting a complex relationship between population management practices and disease dynamics that warrants further investigation.
- 4) Environmental, ethical, and socioeconomic factors all _____ that policymakers must carefully evaluate before implementing large-scale wildlife management interventions.
- 5) The overarching goal of this comprehensive study _____ the multifaceted challenges posed by disease transmission in farmed animals,

integrating ecological, biological, and socio-economic perspectives to produce sustainable solutions.

6) Evidence from multiple independent studies indicates that improper disposal of contaminated waste _____ of zoonotic disease transmission, emphasizing the need for stricter biosecurity measures.

Comprehension tasks

Task 5. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

1) The University of Oxford researchers conducted their study by collecting new field data from badgers killed in 2024 and 2025.

2) More than 200,000 badgers have been killed in England's culls, which represents approximately half of the UK's estimated badger population.

3) The Wildlife Trusts and animal rights campaigners initially supported the badger cull but changed their minds after the first year.

4) The increased risk of bovine tuberculosis in neighbouring cattle herds persisted indefinitely even after the culling operations stopped.

5) The current Labour government has officially announced a specific date when the badger cull will completely end.

Task 6. Answer the questions:

1) According to the Oxford study, by approximately what percentage did the risk of bTB increase in cattle herds located in areas neighbouring the culled zones?

2) What are the three main ways bovine tuberculosis (bTB) can spread, as mentioned in the text?

3) What data source did the researchers re-analyse for their two-part study, and during what years did the original trial take place?

4) What did the researchers conclude about the timing of the increased bTB risk in neighbouring cattle relative to the culling activity?

5) What four components does the Defra spokesperson say will be included in the government's new TB eradication package?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 7. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1. The ethical and economic consequences of badger culling on rural communities and wildlife conservation. Discuss how culling over 200,000 badgers (half the UK population) pits farmers' livelihoods against wildlife conservation.

Analyse the economic pressure on farmers losing cattle to bTB versus the moral costs for NGOs like the Wildlife Trusts and Badger Trust. Examine the psychological stress in rural communities divided between protecting livestock and opposing animal killing, and how this affects public trust in government conservation policies.

2. The public health and policy implications of inadequate bTB eradication strategies in England. Discuss how Oxford University's findings (reduced bTB in culled areas but 29% higher risk nearby) reveal flaws in England's eradication strategy. Analyse consequences for animal health, given bTB spreads between cattle, via equipment, and from badgers. Examine political uncertainty: Labour promised to end the cull but made no announcement after election. Discuss how lacking clear, science-based solutions (vaccination, herd management, biosecurity promised by Defra) undermines farmers' trust and creates long-term risks for agriculture.

TEXT 6

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What do you know about the disease «rabies» (how it spreads, symptoms, treatment)?
- 2) Which animals do you think are most commonly associated with carrying rabies?
- 3) What are some ways people can protect themselves and their pets from this disease?

Rabies reemergence in animals (bats) and risks to humans

by Julia Musto, the Independent's US science and climate correspondent

Published: 28 July 2025

Cases of rabies, a viral and potentially fatal disease that primarily spreads through the bites or scratches of infected animals, have recently been reported around the Northeast.

Officials in the town of Westfield, New Jersey, issued a public health alert after two reports of bites associated with a raccoon that may be infected with rabies, put the surrounding communities on high alert.

New York's Nassau County Department of Health declared an imminent public health threat in response to the ongoing spread of rabies among wild and feral-domesticated animals in the county.

"The resurgence of rabies in Nassau County, with its high population density and after nearly a decade of absence, represents a serious and evolving public health concern," Nassau County Health Commissioner Dr. Irina Gelman said in a release.

"Let me be clear, there is no cause for alarm, as we have not yet received any reports of human transmission," Gelman said, according *People*. "However, the time for prevention is now."

But, whether or not an uptick in new cases indicate that rabies is becoming more prevalent in the region is unclear right now.

Around 4,000 animal rabies cases are reported each year. The animals most frequently found with rabies in the U.S. are bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says.

Outside of the Northeast, there has been a rise in cases linked to bats, resulting in three rabies deaths in a period of just five weeks a couple of years ago, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2021, five Americans died of rabies, the largest number in a decade.

Human-caused climate change has resulted in the expansion of vampire bats' habitat, and increased the risk of rabies in domestic animals, according to scientists.

Initial rabies symptoms are similar to the flu, including fever, headache, and muscle aches. They can progress to neurological and physical symptoms, such as delirium, a fear of water, and seizures.

To prevent the risk of infection, there are several steps people can take. Make sure pets are up to date with their vaccines, stay away from wildlife, call animal control to remove stray animals from the neighborhoods, and wash any bites or scratches immediately with soap and water after possible exposures before seeking medical attention.

“Rabies is preventable through vaccination and pet owners should remember that the best protection is to vaccinate for rabies and license all pets with the town,” Westfield officials said.

The Independent: интернет-ресурс. – URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/rabies-symptoms-humans-health-b2797642.html> (дата обращения: 08.05.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

- 1) A viral, potentially fatal disease transmitted primarily through bites or scratches from infected animals.
- 2) An official warning issued by authorities to inform the public about a health risk and recommend precautions.
- 3) The return or increase of something after a period of decline or absence.
- 4) Animals that are not fully domesticated and live in the wild, often interacting with human environments.
- 5) Information collected through systematic observation and monitoring to track the spread of diseases.
- 6) Medical treatment given after a person has been exposed to a pathogen, such as rabies, to prevent infection.
- 7) The administration of a vaccine to stimulate the body’s immune response and provide protection against a specific disease.

Task 2. Match adjectives to nouns to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. viral | a) population density |
| 2. public | b) concern |
| 3. high | c) disease |
| 4. serious | d) animals |
| 5. rabid | e) animals |
| 6. neurological | f) health alert |
| 7. domestic | g) treatment |
| 8. effective | h) symptoms |

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

1) Cases of rabies, a _____ that primarily spreads through the bites or scratches of infected animals, have recently been reported around the Northeast.

2) Over the last year, the department has confirmed 25 _____, including raccoons and feral cats.

3) The resurgence of rabies in Nassau County, with its _____ and after nearly a decade of absence, represents a serious and evolving public health concern.

4) The resurgence of rabies in Nassau County represents a _____ and evolving public health _____.

5) Human-caused climate change has resulted in the expansion of vampire bats' habitat, and increased the risk of rabies in _____.

6) Initial rabies symptoms are similar to the flu... They can progress to _____ and physical _____, such as delirium, a fear of water, and seizures.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct verb-noun collocations above. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

spread with deadly speed; affect bats, raccoons and other animals; confirm 25 rabid animals; issue a public health alert; represent a serious public health concern; die from rabies; vaccinate for rabies

1) Rabies can _____ in both animals and humans.

2) The resurgence of the virus in densely populated areas does _____.

3) In the last year, local authorities _____, including raccoons and feral cats.

4) Health officials in Westfield had to _____ after reports of bites.

5) Thanks to modern medicine, fewer than ten people in the U.S. annually _____.

6) Pet owners should remember to regularly _____ their dogs and cats.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can heck the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

1) Officials issued a warning _____ a possible rabies threat.

2) The declaration comes _____ response to the ongoing spread of the virus.

- 3) The virus is circulating _____ the area.
- 4) Initial symptoms are similar _____ the flu.
- 5) Wash any bites or scratches immediately _____ soap and water.
- 6) There has been a rise _____ cases linked to bats.
- 7) The resurgence comes _____ nearly a decade of absence.
- 8) This declaration allows us to respond _____ prevent further spread.

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

- 1) Bats are one of the main carriers of rabies in the United States.
- 2) In Nassau County, no cases of rabies have been confirmed since 2016 until recently.
- 3) The article states that human-to-human transmission of rabies is common.
- 4) Climate change has contributed to an increased risk of rabies in domestic animals.
- 5) The symptoms of rabies always include a fear of water from the very beginning.

Task 7. Answer the questions:

- 1) Which animals are most frequently found with rabies in the U.S. according to the CDC?
- 2) How many deaths from rabies were registered in the U.S. in 2021?
- 3) What are the initial symptoms of rabies infection?
- 4) What measures are recommended to prevent the risk of infection?
- 5) Why is post-exposure treatment considered highly effective?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1. The role of bats and other wildlife in the spread of rabies: global risks and prevention strategies. Analyze how different animal species (bats, raccoons, foxes) contribute to the circulation of the rabies virus in various regions of the world. Discuss successful and unsuccessful measures to control the disease in wildlife.

2. The impact of climate change on the spread of zoonotic diseases: the case of rabies and expanding habitats of wild animals. Explore how global warming and human activity change the geography of infectious diseases. Use the example of rabies and the expansion of vampire bats' habitat to illustrate the growing risks for humans and domestic animals.

TEXT 7

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What does it mean if a country is “not prepared” for a big animal disease outbreak? What can happen if the government and farmers are not ready?
- 2) How can a country prepare for serious animal diseases?

UK “not prepared” for major animal disease outbreak like foot and mouth or bird flu

Watchdog calls for urgent action after government admits there is a “very high” risk of an outbreak to which it would be unable to respond effectively.

By Emily Beament

Published: 04 June 2025

A new report from the National Audit Office (NAO) has warned that the Government is not adequately prepared for the increasing risk of animal diseases, and would struggle to manage a major outbreak.

Animal diseases such as bird flu, bluetongue, and African swine fever pose significant threats to England's farming sector, food security, human health, and wildlife. The costs associated with an outbreak can escalate into billions of pounds, the report said.

The 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth cost an estimated £13.8 billion in today's prices, devastating farming businesses and leading to the slaughter of thousands of animals. The countryside was shut to recreation and tourism.

Since 2020, 7.2 million birds have been culled in avian flu outbreaks, which have devastated wild seabird colonies across the UK.

The NAO acknowledged that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency¹ (APHA) have worked hard to tackle recent outbreaks.

However, the watchdog said that these public bodies would likely struggle with a more severe outbreak or concurrent serious outbreaks.

A report from the NAO warned that long-term resilience to disease in livestock is being undermined by officials having to focus on increasingly frequent outbreaks – and there is no long-term strategy for improving the situation.

There are significant gaps in contingency plans for outbreaks, and plans for specific diseases have not been updated with the latest findings, with its strategy for coping with foot and mouth disease not updated since 2011.

Just 5 per cent of live animal imports are undergoing physical checks, all taking place at the final customer destination, against a target of 100 per cent checks at border control, raising the risk of “exotic” diseases arriving from abroad.

A fifth of vet roles are vacant at the APHA, and there is a “very high” risk of site failure at the Government’s key animal science lab at Weybridge, the report said.

The report said that while a £2.8 billion redevelopment programme at Weybridge is now on track, the main new laboratory facilities will not be delivered for another 10 years.

The report found Defra thought there was a “very high” risk of an outbreak to which it would be unable to respond effectively, but it lacks a long-term strategy and action plan for improving resilience to animal disease, and many of its activities are reactive rather than part of a coherent plan.

A comprehensive livestock movement tracing system – crucial once infection is detected – is lacking, with the costs of an upgraded scheme now estimated at £563 million amid concerns over delivering it in the face of rising costs and funding constraints, while there are also issues with vaccine supplies.

Gareth Davies, head of the NAO, said: “Defra has assessed that the risk of an outbreak to which it would be unable to respond effectively is above the level it considers tolerable, but it has not determined a way to reduce this risk. A long-term strategy and action plan are urgently needed, to protect national economic resilience as well as food security, human health and rural communities.”

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, chairman of the parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts, said: “Despite some good work to identify new threats, Government’s preparations for a future major outbreak are being hampered by a lack of capacity, skills and long-term strategy. Government’s failure to carry out checks on animal imports is also threatening biosecurity at the border. Resilience to a severe outbreak has not been tested in recent years, but the threat remains ever increasing as our livestock become more susceptible to disease. Without changes to the current operating system, there is a very real risk that Government would not be able to respond effectively.”

*The Independent: Интернет-ресурс. – URL:
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/animal-disease-warning-bird-flu-warning-swine-fever-foot-mouth-b2763334.html> (дата обращения: 19.04.2026)*

¹ Агентство по охране здоровья животных и растений

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words according to the following definitions:

- 1) a sudden occurrence of a disease affecting many animals at the same time
- 2) illnesses that affect animals
- 3) the killing of animals, usually to stop a disease from spreading
- 4) mass killing of birds or animals to control disease
- 5) the ability to recover from or withstand difficulties (especially disease)
- 6) farm animals such as cows, sheep, pigs, etc.
- 7) plans prepared in advance for possible emergencies or disasters
- 8) animals or products brought into the country from abroad

- 9) diseases that are not normally found in the country (foreign diseases)
- 10) a doctor who treats animals
- 11) a place where scientific experiments and tests on animals are carried out
- 12) measures to protect against the spread of disease
- 13) the process of following and recording the movements of animals

Task 2. Fill in the gaps with suitable words/phrases from the text.

outbreak (2), culled, biosecurity, contingency plans, resilience, livestock, exotic diseases, foot and mouth, vaccine supplies

The UK government is not adequately prepared for a major animal disease 1) _____. Diseases such as bird flu, bluetongue and 2) _____ continue to threaten the 3) _____ sector. In recent years, millions of birds have been 4) _____ because of avian flu. Experts warn that gaps in 5) _____, weak border controls and the risk of 6) _____ entering the country are serious problems. Furthermore, there is a lack of long-term 7) _____ to animal disease, and issues with 8) _____ make the situation even more difficult. Without urgent improvements in 9) _____, the country may not be able to respond effectively to the next big 10) _____.

Task 3. In each group of four words, find the word that does not fit and explain why.

- 1) outbreak; epidemic; resilience; infection
- 2) culling; slaughter; vaccination; killing
- 3) biosecurity; contingency plans; border control; livestock
- 4) Defra; APHA; NAO; foot and mouth disease
- 5) exotic diseases; bird flu; African swine fever; food security
- 6) animal imports; vaccine supplies; livestock movement tracing system; human health

Task 4. Complete the table with the correct form of the word.

Verb	Noun	Adjective
to prepare		
	response	responsive
	infection	
to trace		traceable
	culling	culled
to import		
		vaccinated

Task 5. Divide the words below into 4 logical groups.

outbreak, foot and mouth, bird flu, bluetongue, African swine fever, exotic diseases, livestock, animals, culling, slaughter, culled, biosecurity, contingency plans, resilience, Defra, APHA, animal imports, border control, livestock movement tracing system, vaccine supplies, animal science lab, food security, human health

Diseases	Animals and Control Measures	Prevention and Preparedness	Organisations and Systems

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Answer the following questions using information from the text. Use your own words where possible.

- 1) What are the main threats mentioned in the report regarding animal diseases?
- 2) Why does the report mention the 2001 foot and mouth outbreak?
- 3) What problems exist with animal imports and border control?
- 4) What issues does the Animal and Plant Health Agency currently face?
- 5) According to the report, what is missing in the government's approach to animal disease control?
- 6) Why is a livestock movement tracing system important?
- 7) What do Gareth Davies and Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown say about the current situation?
- 8) What recommendations can you make based on the problems described in the text?

Task 7. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), or False (F). If the statement is false, make it correct.

- 1) The National Audit Office report says the UK government is well prepared for major animal disease outbreaks.
- 2) The 2001 foot and mouth outbreak cost around £13.8 billion in today's prices.
- 3) Since 2020, over 7 million birds have been culled due to avian flu.
- 4) The strategy for dealing with foot and mouth disease was last updated in 2020.
- 5) Only 5% of live animal imports receive physical checks.
- 6) There is a shortage of veterinarians at the Animal and Plant Health Agency.
- 7) The new laboratory facilities at Weybridge will be ready in the next 2–3 years.

8) Defra has a clear long-term strategy to improve resilience to animal diseases.

9) A comprehensive livestock movement tracing system is already fully operational.

10) The risk of an outbreak that the government cannot respond to effectively is considered “very high”.

Presentation / Report Task

Topic 1. “Russia’s Preparedness for Major Animal Disease Outbreaks: Current Risks and Challenges”

Suggested Structure:

1. Major animal diseases threatening Russia today (ASF, Avian Influenza, Brucellosis, Rabies, etc.)
2. Recent outbreaks and their economic and social impact
3. Strengths and weaknesses of the Russian veterinary system
4. The role of Rosselkhoznadzor (Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision)
5. Future risks and forecasts

Topic 2. “African Swine Fever (ASF) in Russia: Spread, Impact and Lessons Learned”

Suggested Structure:

1. History and geographical spread of ASF in Russia since 2007
2. Economic consequences for the pig farming industry
3. Control measures used (culling, quarantine, biosecurity)
4. Comparison with other countries (China, Europe)
5. Why ASF remains a persistent threat in Russia

Topic 3. “Improving Biosecurity and Veterinary Protection in Russian Livestock Farming”

Suggested Structure:

1. Current problems in Russia’s veterinary and biosecurity system
2. Impact of sanctions and import substitution on veterinary medicine
3. Digitalization in veterinary control (Mercury system, animal traceability)
4. Key areas for improvement (laboratories, vaccines, border control, specialists)
5. Recommendations and strategic outlook for 2027–2035

Extra topics:

- The Impact of Climate Change on the Spread of Animal Diseases in Russia
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Russia: Threats to Commercial Poultry and Wild Birds
- Biosecurity Challenges at Russia’s Southern and Eastern Borders

TEXT 8

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) Do you have a pet or know someone with a pet? How would you feel if a new medicine could help your pet live longer?
- 2) How important is it for scientists to try to help both pets and people with the same research?
- 3) Do you think pet owners should be paid or helped if their animals join research studies? Why or why not?

Cats may hold key to treating human cancer, scientists say

By Vishwam Sankaran, Science and Technology Reporter

Published: 29 August 2025

A new kind of targeted therapy to treat head and neck cancer in cats could hold the key to developing similar treatments in humans, according to a new study.

Head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) is a notoriously deadly and difficult-to-treat cancer in cats and humans.

Now, a small trial including 20 cats with this cancer suggests companion animals could be better models than mice to test drugs for the condition in humans.

Researchers found in the trial that over a third of the cats who received treatment had their disease controlled with minimal side effects, with results indicating the drug could be effective for humans with HNSCC as well.

In the study, scientists tested a first-of-its-kind drug initially conceptualised to treat human head and neck cancers. It is the first to target the Deadly STAT3, which controls the expression of some genes and is present in a range of both solid and liquid tumours, including HNSCC cases.

Cancers like HNSCC are known to be extremely difficult to treat in pet cats and most animals with the condition die within 2 to 3 months of diagnosis. One cat from the trial was a 9-year-old black domestic shorthair named Jak, who was initially given only 6 to 8 weeks to live after diagnosis. After weekly treatments for one month, researchers found that his symptoms – mainly, a watery eye – greatly improved, and he ultimately lived more than 8 months after diagnosis.

“During that time, my son finished college and my daughter finished her master’s programme. Jak got to spend one more Christmas with us, and he loved our Christmas tree. He was worth every bit of the effort,” said Tina Thomas, the cat’s human companion.

Of the 20 cats that were enrolled, researchers observed that seven of them showed either a partial response or stable disease during the study period. The seven that responded to treatment had an average survival post-treatment of 161 days, according to the study. “There are two major findings from this study,” explains study co-author Daniel Johnson of the University of California, San Francisco.

Firstly, it shows that it's possible to target molecules behind gene expression called transcription factors that are behind the rise of cancer. "This is something that has been notoriously difficult in the past," Dr Johnson says. "Also, it demonstrated that pets with cancer can be a good representation of human disease and that clinical trials in pets may yield more reliable results than tests in mouse models," he adds.

Scientists found that the drug molecule worked by blocking the activity of STAT3 and increasing the levels of PD-1, a protein associated with an immune response to cancer. "This study is a great example of how we can think more carefully about spending our very limited resources on studies in lab mice that are not even the best models of human cancers," said Jennifer Grandis, another author of the study.

"By partnering with veterinary oncologists and doing clinical trials in companion animals, we can learn an enormous amount about how these drugs work while also helping people's pets. None of the cats in these trials were harmed, and many of them benefited," Dr Grandis said.

The Independent: интернет-ресурс. – URL:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/author/vishwam-sankaran> (дата обращения: 23.05.2026)

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

- 1) A phrase meaning a disease that is known to cause death often and is hard to treat.
- 2) A term for a medical study that tests a drug's safety or effectiveness.
- 3) A phrase meaning that the disease is being held in check and not progressing.
- 4) The name of the molecule targeted by the drug in this study.
- 5) A clinical outcome meaning a partial reduction or improvement in a tumour.
- 6) A phrase that describes the mean time animals lived after receiving treatment.
- 7) A term for animals kept as companions that are suggested as models for testing drugs.
- 8) A phrase referring to negative reactions to a drug, emphasised as very small in the text.

Task 2. Match adjectives to nouns to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. difficult-to treat | a) response |
| 2. first-of-its-kind | b) animals |
| 3. partial | c) side effect |
| 4. average | d) survival |
| 5. companion | e) trial |

- 6. minimal
- 7. transcription
- 8. clinical

- f) drug
- g) factors
- h) cancer

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) Well-designed _____ in veterinary settings require clear inclusion criteria, owner consent, and regular quality-of-life assessments.
- 2) The research centre announced a _____ that targets a protein previously considered “undruggable” in several tumour types.
- 3) After two months of therapy, the patient showed a _____, so the team decided to continue treatment and monitor tumour size closely.
- 4) When comparing treatment regimens across practices, clinicians used _____ as one of the key outcome measures.
- 5) Integrating data from _____ with spontaneous tumours can improve translational relevance for human oncology research.
- 6) Owners reported better daily functioning in their pets when the new protocol produced symptom relief with _____.
- 7) Laboratory studies revealed that the candidate therapy interferes with a _____ implicated in cell proliferation.
- 8) Veterinarians often face dilemmas when managing a _____ in a pet because standard options may offer only short-lived benefits.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct verb-noun collocations above. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

block activity – demonstrate efficacy – target molecules – control expression – yield results – increase levels

- 1) The experimental therapy was designed to _____ that drive tumour growth rather than just the visible mass.
- 2) The new drug aims to _____ of genes that cause unchecked cell division in HNSCC.
- 3) The small trial helped _____ of the STAT3 inhibitor in a real-world clinical setting.
- 4) Trials in companion animals may _____ that translate more reliably to human patients than mouse studies.
- 5) Researchers showed the compound can _____ of STAT3, shutting down a pathway crucial for the cancer’s survival.
- 6) Treatment with the molecule appeared to _____ of PD-1 on immune cells, potentially enhancing anti-tumour responses.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can check the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

- 1) Seven cats in the trial responded ____ the new treatment.
- 2) The researchers worked in partnership ____ veterinary oncologists to run the study.
- 3) Tumours like HNSCC are often rife ____ genetic changes that drive aggression.
- 4) Untreated cats with this cancer are at risk ____ rapid decline and early death.
- 5) The trial's outcomes were beneficial ____ several companion animals and their owners.
- 6) The increase in PD-1 levels was indicative ____ an activated immune response.
- 7) Cats were screened prior ____ enrolment to confirm their diagnosis and general health.
- 8) Results from pet trials may translate ____ improved therapies for humans.

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

- 1) The drug tested in the trial was the first medication ever used to treat cancer in cats.
- 2) Over one-third of the cats in the trial had their disease controlled with minimal side effects.
- 3) All cats in the trial lived more than eight months after diagnosis.
- 4) The drug increases PD-1 levels by blocking STAT3 activity.
- 5) The study proved that results from cat trials always translate directly to human patients.

Task 7. Answer the questions:

- 1) What disease was the new targeted therapy tested for in cats?
- 2) How many cats took part in the trial?
- 3) What did the study show about the effectiveness of the drug?
- 4) How did the drug work in the cats' bodies?
- 5) Why do the researchers think this study may be important for treating humans with cancer?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1) A new targeted therapy for head and neck cancer in cats and its importance for human medicine.

Discuss how a new drug tested on 20 cats with head and neck squamous cell carcinoma may help both veterinary and human cancer treatment. Explain why this disease is difficult to treat, how the drug works, and why companion animals may be better research models than mice. Give examples of how animal cancer research is used in different countries.

2) The role of companion animals in developing new cancer treatments for humans.

Discuss how clinical trials in cats with cancer can help scientists develop better treatments for people. Explain why companion animals may be more useful than mice in some studies, what benefits such trials can bring to both animals and humans, and why this approach is important for future medicine.

TEXT 9

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) In what ways do you think Artificial Intelligence (AI) could be useful in the field of medicine and healthcare?
- 2) What do you understand by the term "personalized medicine" or a "made-to-measure" treatment?
- 3) What are some of the biggest challenges in finding a cure for cancer?

A man used ChatGPT to help make a cancer vaccine for his dog

By Justin Stebbing, Professor of Biomedical Sciences at Anglia Ruskin University

Published: 24 March 2026

An Australian tech entrepreneur has helped create what appears to be a made-to-measure cancer vaccine for his dog, Rosie, using artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT as part of the process. It is about reading the instructions inside a tumour and then writing a new set of instructions to help the immune system see it.

Rosie is an eight-year-old rescue Staffordshire bull terrier cross that developed aggressive mast cell cancer, a common skin cancer in dogs. Vets told her owner, Paul Conyngham, that she probably had only months to live. Instead of accepting that, he decided to use the tools he knew from his day job in tech – data analysis, AI and coding – and apply them to his dog's cancer.

Every cell in the body contains DNA – a long chemical molecule that serves as a biological instruction manual for all cellular processes. You can think of DNA as a very long string of letters written in an alphabet of just four characters. Cancer occurs when enough changes accumulate in this instruction manual – they can arise by chance or due to external damage. As a result, some cells begin to grow and divide uncontrollably, forming a tumor.

To understand exactly how a tumor differs from healthy cells, scientists perform DNA sequencing. This process involves reading the entire sequence of «letters» in the tumor's DNA and comparing it to a reference, «normal» version. This way, all the mutations – the «typos» in the biological code that make cells cancerous – can be identified.

This is exactly what the dog's owner did: he ordered DNA sequencing of his dog Rosie's tumor. As a result, a large file was produced, listing all the unique mutations in her tumor – those very differences that distinguished her cancer cells from healthy tissues and could become targets for a future vaccine.

AI systems make the complex biology more navigable for non-experts, suggesting possible targets and explaining concepts – though their outputs still require expert scrutiny. Put those together, and something that would once have

required a major pharmaceutical programme – a bespoke cancer vaccine – can now be attempted, at least experimentally, for a single animal.

For the informed public, perhaps the most important point is not that AI has magically solved cancer, but that the basic ingredients of high-end personalised medicine are becoming more accessible. A motivated dog owner can now order tumour DNA sequencing, ask an AI to help interpret it, and partner with an academic lab to turn that interpretation into an mRNA vaccine.

A significant scientific and ethical challenge ahead is to develop methods for testing such approaches properly, protect patients and animals from false hope and unsafe experiments, and determine who should have access if they prove to be effective.

*The Independent: интернет-ресурс. – URL:
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/ai-cancer-vaccine-dog-chatgpt-b2944445.html>
(дата обращения: 15.04.2026).*

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

1) A personalized treatment designed to help the immune system recognize and fight cancer cells.

2) Software that uses machine learning and data analysis to assist in complex tasks, such as interpreting biological data.

3) The process of determining the exact order of nucleotides (letters) within a DNA molecule.

4) Changes or "typos" in the DNA sequence that can cause cells to become cancerous.

5) The body's defense system that identifies and destroys foreign or harmful cells, including cancer.

6) A vaccine that uses messenger RNA to instruct cells to produce a protein that triggers an immune response.

7) A medical approach that tailors treatment to the individual characteristics of each patient.

Task 2. Match adjectives to nouns to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

1. aggressive

2. mast cell

3. personalized

4. cancer

5. biological

6. huge

7. cancerous

a) tissue

b) vaccine

c) cancer

d) instruction

e) cancer

f) file

g) tumour

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) The main goal of the treatment was to destroy all _____ without harming the healthy cells.
- 2) The dog was diagnosed with _____, and the veterinarians gave her only a few months to live.
- 3) After the analysis, the scientists received a _____ containing all the genetic mutations found in the tumor.
- 4) The _____ was surgically removed and sent for DNA sequencing to identify the mutations.
- 5) _____ is one of the most common types of skin cancer found in dogs.
- 6) Thanks to modern technology, a _____ was developed specifically to target the unique mutations in her tumor.
- 7) _____ in DNA tells every cell how to function, and errors in this code can lead to disease.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct verb-noun collocations below. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

sequence the tumour's DNA; design a personalised cancer vaccine; manufacture a physical mRNA vaccine; sift through mutations; shrink markedly; order tumour DNA sequencing; improve significantly

- 1) The first step was to _____ to understand what made Rosie's tumour different.
- 2) Paul Conyngham used AI tools to _____ and pick out candidates for neoantigens.
- 3) Once the targets were chosen, university researchers helped to _____ in the lab.
- 4) After the vaccination, several of Rosie's tumours began to _____.
- 5) The treatment helped Rosie's overall energy and behaviour to _____.
- 6) This case shows that a motivated owner can now _____ and use modern technology for their pet.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps. You can check the text to make sure that you know the correct answers.

- 1) The science behind this sounds intimidating – DNA sequencing, mRNA vaccines, “neoantigens” – but _____ its core, it is about reading the instructions inside a tumour.

2) She had surgery and chemotherapy, but the disease kept coming back and she ended up with large tumours _____ her leg.

3) He asked it how scientists design personalised cancer vaccines and how he might go _____ a list of mutations to specific targets.

4) The body then breaks _____ the mRNA; it does not change your DNA.

5) He also used protein structure prediction software to model how some _____ these mutated proteins would look.

6) It was a one-off product, made just _____ Rosie, encoding several of the mutations in her tumour.

7) A significant scientific and ethical challenge ahead is to develop methods _____ testing such approaches properly.

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

1) Rosie's cancer was a rare form of tumour not typically found in dogs.

2) The AI chatbot manufactured the physical vaccine for Rosie.

3) The vaccine was designed to teach Rosie's immune system to recognize her specific tumour cells.

4) The article claims that this approach is a guaranteed cure for cancer in dogs.

5) The case of Rosie is presented as a controlled scientific study with proven results.

Task 7. Answer the questions:

1) What type of cancer did Rosie have?

2) What was the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in creating the vaccine?

3) How does an mRNA cancer vaccine work, according to the text?

4) Why can't we be sure that Rosie's improvement was solely due to the vaccine?

5) What is the main message of the article for the general public?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1) The future of personalised medicine: ethical and practical challenges of custom-made treatments. Discuss how technologies like DNA sequencing and mRNA are making bespoke therapies possible. Analyse who should have access to

such treatments, how to ensure their safety without lengthy clinical trials, and what ethical issues arise when owners or patients seek experimental cures.

2) The role of artificial intelligence in modern healthcare: from data analysis to patient care. Explore how AI tools (like ChatGPT) are being used by both professionals and non-experts to understand complex medical data, suggest diagnoses, and design treatments. Compare opportunities (accessibility, speed) with risks (errors, need for expert oversight).

TEXT 10

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What are the most common health problems in pet cats?
- 2) Why do pet cats sometimes have problems like obesity (being too fat), fleas or long nails? What can owners do to keep their cats healthy?
- 3) Why is it important for vets to know the most common diseases and disorders in cats? How can this help pet owners and animals?

Feline unwell: Vets reveal the most common disorders in pet cats – including overgrown nails, flea infestation and obesity

By Shivali Best, science & technology editor

Published: 28 February 2023

Fleas, worms, and diabetes are all conditions that might spring to mind when it comes to disorders in cats.

Now, a study has revealed a complete list of the most common disorders in cats, based on the veterinary records of more than one million pets in the UK.

Gum disease tops the list as the most common disorder, followed by obesity, overgrown nails and flea infestation.

“Everyone who loves cats wants to make their lives happier and healthier,” said Dan O’Neill, Associate Professor in Companion Animal Epidemiology at the Royal Veterinary College and lead author of the paper. “This study helps owners to understand that dental, weight and parasite care are the key health issues of cats in general, so that owners can focus their care and finances better on giving their cats a better life.”

In the study, the researchers set out to understand the most common conditions in pet cats, and how they vary based on the animal’s age and gender. The team collected data from a random sample of 18,249 cats from a study population of 1,255,130 cats in the UK. Of this sample, the most common breed was the British Short Hair (3.01 per cent), Ragdoll (1.82 per cent) and Bengal (1.22 per cent). Other common breeds included were the Maine Coon (0.93 per cent), Persian (0.73 per cent) and Siamese (0.68 per cent).

An assessment of their vet records revealed that, on average, cats were diagnosed with one condition every year, although male and older cats were more likely to suffer from multiple conditions. Gum disease (15.23 per cent) topped the list as the most common condition, followed by obesity (11.58 per cent), general dental disease (9.23 per cent), overgrown nails (5.23 per cent), flea infestation (5.07 per cent) and heart murmur (4.44 per cent). Other conditions in the top list included anorexia (1.74 per cent), conjunctivitis (1.65 per cent), and cystitis (1.11 per cent).

However, male and female cats had different risks for 14 of the 30 most common conditions. Females were found to be at higher risk for post-operative

wound complications, over-grooming, flea bite hypersensitivity, hyperthyroidism, and overgrown nails. Meanwhile, male cats were more likely to suffer with gum disease, road traffic accidents, heart murmurs, lameness, obesity, abscess wounds and cat bite injuries.

Age also appears to play a key role in the risk of various conditions.

Cats who were younger than eight years old were more likely to have cat bite injuries, flea infestations, road traffic accidents and post-operative wound complications. In contrast, older cats (older than eight years old) had a higher risk for 23 conditions, including lameness, cystitis and heart murmurs.

Professor Daniëlle Gunn-Moore, Professor of Feline Medicine at the University of Edinburgh and co-author of the study, said: “Britain is a country of animal lovers, yet this study shows that the most common illnesses cats suffer with are almost completely preventable. For example, cats cannot gain excessive weight on their own – I know myself how tough it is when your beloved cat asks for a few more kibbles. But we must remember that food is not love; it is far better to play a game with them instead. If we love our cats, we owe it to them to provide the best quality of life that we can. This study gives us the evidence base to do that.”

The team hopes the findings will help vets and cat owners to better understand and predict disorders in their cats.

“Cats have a reputation for being easy to keep but this new data really demonstrates how important it is for owners to ensure that they're keeping on top of their cats' basic welfare needs,” Justine Shotton, British Veterinary Association Senior Vice President said. “Whether your cat is the laidback type or a bundle of feline energy, regular health checks and a good relationship with your vet can ensure that you're not missing the subtle signs that they're unwell or in pain.”

Daily Mail: Немецкое издание. – URL: <https://www.dailymail.com/sciencetech/article-11798111/The-common-disorders-pet-CATS-including-overgrown-nails-flea-infestation-obesity.html> (дата обращения: 19.04.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Match the terms with their definitions:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Gum disease | a) Excessive body weight that can cause health problems |
| 2. Flea infestation | b) Inflammation of the bladder |
| 3. Obesity | c) An abnormal heart sound |
| 4. Overgrown nails | d) Difficulty walking due to pain or injury in the legs |
| 5. Heart murmur | e) A condition where a cat has too many fleas on its body |
| 6. Cystitis | f) Inflammation or infection of the gums |
| 7. Hyperthyroidism | g) Nails that have grown too long |
| 8. Lameness | h) Overactive thyroid gland |

Task 2. Complete the sentences using the words from the box.

disorders, veterinary records, obesity, flea infestation, gum disease, health checks, overgrown nails, cystitis, lameness, welfare needs

- 1) According to the study based on _____ of over a million cats, the most common problem is _____.
- 2) Many cats suffer from _____ and need regular nail trimming.
- 3) _____ and _____ are particularly common in older cats.
- 4) Regular _____ help owners detect problems early.
- 5) The study emphasises the importance of meeting cats' basic _____.
- 6) Male cats are more likely to suffer from _____ and cat bite injuries.
- 7) The research helps owners understand the most common _____ in pet cats.

Task 3. Complete the table.

Verb / Adjective	Noun
obese	
lame	
prevent	
diagnose	
overgrow	
hypersensitive	

Task 4. In each group of four words, find the word that does not fit and explain why.

- 1) obesity – gum disease – heart murmur – flea infestation
- 2) vets – veterinary records – lameness – Royal Veterinary College
- 3) cystitis – conjunctivitis – hyperthyroidism – overgrown nails
- 4) dental disease – anorexia – over-grooming – abscess wounds

Task 5. Put the words into 4 logical groups.

gum disease, obesity, overgrown nails, flea infestation, heart murmur, anorexia, conjunctivitis, cystitis, hyperthyroidism, lameness, abscess wounds, cat bite injuries, dental disease, over-grooming, flea bite hypersensitivity, post-operative wound complications

Dental Problems	Parasitic / Skin Problems	Internal / Systemic Diseases	Injuries and Other Conditions

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Use the words from the text to complete the summary.

The most common 1) _____ in pet cats according to the study are 2) _____ and 3) _____. Many cats also suffer from 4) _____ and 5) _____. The research, based on 6) _____ of more than one million cats, shows that male and older cats tend to have more 7) _____. Regular 8) _____ are very important for early detection of problems. Experts emphasise that most of these conditions are 9) _____ if owners provide proper 10) _____.

Task 7. Answer the questions.

- 1) What are the three conditions that usually come to mind when thinking about disorders in cats?
- 2) What is the main source of data for the study on common disorders in cats?
- 3) According to the study, what are the three most common disorders in pet cats in the UK?
- 4) Which condition tops the list as the most common disorder in cats?
- 5) How many cats were included in the random sample analysed in the study?
- 6) What is the average number of conditions diagnosed in cats per year?
- 7) Which gender and age group of cats are more likely to suffer from multiple conditions?
- 8) What differences were found between male and female cats in terms of health risks? Give examples.
- 9) How does the age of cats affect their risk of developing certain conditions?
- 10) According to Professor Daniëlle Gunn-Moore, why are most common cat illnesses almost completely preventable?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 8. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short written report of 220–280 words).

- 1) The Most Common Health Problems in Pet Cats
- 2) Gender Differences in Cat Health
- 3) Age Matters: How a Cat's Age Affects Its Health
- 4) Preventable Diseases: What Cat Owners Can Do
- 5) The Importance of Regular Veterinary Care

TEXT 11

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) If a new virus appeared near your town, what one thing would you do first to protect yourself and your family?
- 2) Would you get a vaccine for a new or serious virus if it became available? Why or why not?
- 3) Think about news of viruses spreading from animals to people. Does this make you more careful around animals?

I'm an infectious disease expert. These are viruses I'll be watching in 2026

By Patrick Jackson, Assistant Professor of Infectious Diseases, University of Virginia

Published: 08 January 2026

Influenza A – on the cusp of a pandemic

Influenza A is a perennial threat. The virus infects a wide range of animals and has the ability to mutate rapidly. The most recent influenza pandemic – caused by the H1N1 subtype of influenza in 2009 – killed over 280,000 people worldwide in its first year, and the virus continues to circulate today. This virus was often called swine flu because it originated in pigs in Mexico before circulating around the world.

Most recently, scientists have been monitoring the highly-pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 subtype, or bird flu. This virus was first found in humans in southern China in 1997; wild birds helped spread the virus around the world. In 2024, the virus was found for the first time in dairy cattle in the U.S. and subsequently became established in herds in several states.

The crossover of the virus from birds to mammals created major concern that it could become adapted to humans. Studies suggest there have already been many cow-to-human transmissions.

In 2026, scientists will continue to look for any evidence that H5N1 has changed enough to be transmitted from human to human – a necessary step for the start of a new influenza pandemic. The influenza vaccines currently on the market probably don't offer protection from H5N1, but scientists are working to create vaccines that would be effective against the virus.

Mpox – worldwide and liable to worsen

Mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox virus, was first discovered in the 1950s. For many decades, it was seen rarely, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa. Contrary to its original name, the virus mostly infects rodents and occasionally crossed over into humans.

Mpox is closely related to smallpox, and infection results in a fever and painful rash that can last for weeks. There are several varieties of mpox, including a

generally more severe clade I and a milder clade II. A vaccine for mpox is available, but there are no effective treatments.

In 2022, a global outbreak of clade II mpox spread to more than 100 countries that had never seen the virus before. This outbreak was driven by human-to-human transmission of the virus through close contact, often via sex.

While the number of mpox cases has significantly declined since the 2022 outbreak, clade II mpox has become established around the world. Several countries in central Africa have also reported an increase in clade I mpox cases since 2024. Since August 2025, four clade I mpox cases have occurred in the U.S., including in people who did not travel to Africa.

It is unclear how mpox outbreaks in the U.S. and abroad will continue to evolve in 2026.

The Independent: интернет-ресурс. – URL:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/infectious-disease-influenza-a-mpox-virus-b2896716.html> (дата обращения: 23.05.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

1) A global outbreak of a disease that affects many people across multiple countries or continents simultaneously.

2) A specific variation or strain of a virus that has distinct characteristics from other strains within the same species.

3) To spread or pass from person to person, or from one area to another, often used in the context of disease transmission.

4) To undergo genetic change or alteration, often leading to new virus strains that may differ in infectivity or severity.

5) The process where a virus moves from infecting one species (like birds) to infecting another species (like mammals or humans).

6) A group of organisms or viruses that share a common ancestor and have similar genetic features.

7) The way a disease spreads from one individual or species to another, either directly or indirectly.

8) To become permanently present or accepted in a new environment or population.

Task 2. Match nouns to adjectives to make collocations. Use the information from the text to check your answers.

1. Highly-pathogenic
2. Major
3. Cow-to-human
4. Severe
5. Global

- a) vaccines
- b) clade II
- c) outbreak
- d) transmissions
- e) concern

6. Milder
7. Current
8. Swine

- f) influenza
- g) flu
- h) clade I

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) Veterinarians should be vigilant for cases of _____ in poultry and identify signs early to prevent outbreaks.
- 2) The emergence of _____ in pig herds requires immediate quarantine measures to protect both animals and humans.
- 3) The potential for zoonotic transmission of influenza viruses remains a _____ for public health and veterinary professionals.
- 4) _____ provide limited protection against new influenza strains; ongoing research is essential to develop more effective options.
- 5) _____ of avian influenza H5N1 has been documented, highlighting the importance of biosecurity in farms.
- 6) The virus strain classified as _____ has been associated with higher mortality rates in affected animal populations.
- 7) The _____ of avian influenza has led to increased surveillance and control measures across multiple countries.
- 8) In contrast, _____ strains tend to cause less severe illness but still pose a risk for spreading within animal populations.

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the correct verb-noun collocations above. Each collocation can be used only once. Change the verb form if necessary.

offer protection – look for evidence – infect a wide range – result in a fever – create vaccines – report an increase

- 1) Veterinarians must systematically investigate how certain pathogens _____ of animal species, as this knowledge is crucial for controlling outbreaks effectively.
- 2) Developing comprehensive immunization program that _____ against emerging infectious diseases requires a thorough understanding of pathogen behavior and immune responses.
- 3) Recent epidemiological studies _____ in zoonotic infections, highlighting the need for enhanced surveillance and preventive measures in both domestic and wild animal populations.
- 4) When diagnosing complex cases, veterinary clinicians should _____ not only through laboratory tests but also by observing subtle clinical signs that may indicate underlying infections.
- 5) Pathogens that infect animals often _____, which, if left untreated, can lead to severe complications and affect the overall health and productivity of the animals.

6) Advances in biotechnology are enabling scientists to _____ that are more effective and longer-lasting, ultimately providing better protection against a broad spectrum of infectious agents in veterinary medicine.

Comprehension Tasks

Task 5. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS) according to the information in the article.

1) The H1N1 virus responsible for the 2009 pandemic was first identified in Mexico.

2) In 2024, there were over 1,000 reported cases of H5N1 infection in humans in the USA, indicating high transmissibility of the virus.

3) The mpox virus causes generally mild symptoms, and the mortality rate is about 1%.

4) The H1N1 virus continues to circulate and causes seasonal epidemics in some countries.

5) After 2022, several countries reported an increase in mpox cases, likely due to increased travel and contact among people.

Task 6. Answer the questions:

1) What are the main influenza viruses discussed in the article that have caused recent outbreaks or pandemics?

2) How did the H1N1 virus of 2009 spread and what impact did it have globally?

3) What is mpox, and what are its typical symptoms and mortality rate?

4) How has the circulation of H1N1 and mpox changed in recent years according to the article?

5) What are the challenges in controlling the spread of these viruses mentioned in the article?

Presentation / Report Task

Task 7. Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with examples from different countries.

1) The importance of monitoring and preventing influenza and emerging viral diseases for public health.

Discuss why it is crucial to regularly track the spread of influenza viruses like H1N1 and other infectious diseases such as mpox. Explain how vaccination and preventive measures help reduce the risk of epidemics. Provide examples of how countries worldwide use virus surveillance systems and conduct prevention campaigns to protect populations.

2) The role of animals in research for new drugs and vaccines against viral diseases.

Discuss why using animals, such as cats or mice, is important for developing new treatments and vaccines for viral infections. Explain how research on animals helps us understand how medicines and vaccines work, and why this is vital for human health. Provide examples of how such research is conducted in different countries and how it contributes to medical advances.

TEXT 12

Lead-in.

Discuss the questions:

- 1) What do you know about the "gut microbiome" (the bacteria in our stomachs)? What role does it play in keeping us or animals healthy?
- 2) How do you think the bacteria in an animal's gut could be connected to its immune system?
- 3) List some factors that you believe can influence how successful cancer treatment is.

Your dog's gut health could determine how long they survive after cancer treatment

By Julia Musto in New York

Published: Wednesday 18 February 2026

Your dog's gut health could help to determine how long they could survive cancer, researchers announced Tuesday. Canine cancer patients with certain species of bacteria in their guts were found to live longer after treatment with a new drug than those with other bacteria species, scientists at Oregon State University found in a groundbreaking study.

The findings have potential implications for millions of dogs and their owners – and could even result in lengthening your pet's lifespan.

Almost half of American households have at least one dog, and nearly six million dogs are diagnosed with cancer in the U.S. each year. More than four million die.

The researchers examined the gut health of 51 dogs with various forms of cancer, taking rectal swabs from different ages, breeds and weights.

There are more than 300 breeds of dogs and any breed can get cancer – although past research from U.C. Riverside shows medium-sized dogs may be disproportionately impacted. The most common cancers in dogs are lymphoma, melanoma, bone cancer, bladder cancer and cancer in their blood vessels, according to Colorado State University.

The dogs in the study most commonly had bone and blood vessel cancer, but the researchers did not specify which breeds were tested. The swabs allowed the team to analyze the trillions of species of bacteria living in the dogs' guts, also known as their gut microbiome.

Humans have a gut microbiome, too, which helps to regulate the immune system, support digestion and keep our brains and other areas of the body healthy.

The researchers determined that 11 species of gut bacteria were tied to either positive or negative results after cancer treatment.

“Our study is a first step toward using the gut microbiome as a tool to develop prognoses and to manipulate cancer, not just in dogs, but potentially as a model for human treatments as well,” she said.

Rates of cancer have been rising in younger adults and appear to be rising in dogs over the last few decades, the Animal Cancer Foundation says.

“We do know that diagnosis is happening more frequently because pet parents are seeking veterinary care and specialty care for cancer. Many factors may influence the appearance of an increase in incidence and more funding is needed for these types of studies,” the foundation wrote.

But that doesn’t change the fact that a quarter of dogs are expected to develop cancer at some point during their life. The risk doubles for elderly canines aged 10 and older, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

The Independent: интернет-ресурс. – URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/dog-cancer-treatment-gut-microbiome-b2922887.html> (дата обращения: 20.05.2026).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Find the words in the text according to the following definitions:

- 1) Relating to dogs; relating to, or derived from members of the dog family.
- 2) A new and important discovery or development, especially in science.
- 3) To make something last longer or extend its duration.
- 4) The community of microorganisms (bacteria, fungi, etc.) living in the digestive tracts of animals.
- 5) An estimate or prediction about how a disease (such as cancer) will progress.
- 6) People who own pets, specifically referring to them with affection.
- 7) The number of times an event occurs within a specific population over a certain period of time.

Task 2. Match the English and Russian equivalents

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. in a groundbreaking study | a) новый препарат |
| 2. potential implications | b) определённые виды |
| 3. new drug | c) осведомлённые решения |
| 4. certain species | d) в рамках новаторского исследования |
| 5. informed decisions | e) потенциальные последствия |
| 6. various forms | f) распространённые виды рака |
| 7. past research | g) различные формы |
| 8. common cancers | h) прошлые исследования |

Task 3. Place the collocations from Task 2 in the following sentences:

- 1) It is crucial to make _____ based on reliable data.

- 2) _____, scientists found that the new drug has no side effects.
- 3) The patients were treated with a _____ developed by our company.
- 4) This discovery may have significant _____ for future technologies.
- 5) _____ of fish were found to live at extreme depths in the ocean.
- 6) _____ shows that regular exercise improves mental health.
- 7) Lung and breast cancer are among the most _____ worldwide.
- 8) The patient's symptoms had _____, ranging from mild fatigue to severe joint pain.

Task 4. Complete the following assignments.

- 1) Find a word or phrase in the text that is a synonym for *findings*.
- 2) Which word in the text is an antonym (opposite) of *positive*?
- 3) Fill in the gap with a suitable word from the text: The researchers examined the gut health of 51 dogs with _____ forms of cancer.
- 4) Replace the phrase "to determine how long" from the first sentence of the text with a single verb-synonym.
- 5) Find and write down a compound adjective consisting of two words from the text.

Task 5. Put the prepositions into the gaps (for, in, at, from, to, between, to, over, of, toward, of).

- 1) Researchers ____ Oregon State University found a connection _____ gut bacteria and cancer survival rates.
- 2) The findings have potential implications ____ millions ____ dog owners around the world.
- 3) Scientists took rectal swabs _____ dogs ____ different ages, breeds, and weights for their analysis.
- 4) According ____ Colorado State University, the most common cancers ____ dogs are lymphoma and melanoma.
- 5) The gut microbiome helps _____ regulate the immune system and support digestion.
- 6) Our study is a first step _____ using the gut microbiome as a tool to fight cancer.
- 7) Rates of cancer appear to be rising in dogs _____ the last few decades.

Comprehension tasks

Task 6. Read the text and decide if the statements below are True (T) or False (F) according to the information in the article.

- 1) Scientists discovered that a dog's gut health has no connection to its ability to survive cancer.
- 2) The study was conducted by researchers at Oregon State University.
- 3) According to the research, dogs with certain species of bacteria in their guts lived longer after treatment.
- 4) The findings suggest that all breeds of dogs are equally likely to get cancer.
- 5) To analyze the dogs' gut microbiome, scientists took blood samples from them.
- 6) The most common types of cancer found in the studied dogs were bone and blood vessel cancer.
- 7) The American Veterinary Medical Association states that the risk of cancer doubles for dogs aged 10 and older.
- 8) The Animal Cancer Foundation claims that funding for cancer studies is currently sufficient.

Task 7. Answer the questions according to the text:

- 1) What did researchers at Oregon State University discover about dogs with cancer?
- 2) How many dogs are diagnosed with cancer each year in the U.S., according to the article?
- 3) What is a 'gut microbiome' as described in the text?
- 4) Which types of cancer were most common among the dogs participating in the study?
- 5) According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, what happens to the risk of cancer for dogs aged ten and older?
- 6) Why does the Animal Cancer Foundation say that cancer diagnoses are happening more frequently?
- 7) What potential benefit for humans do scientists hope this research might lead to in the future?

Presentation / Report Task

Choose one of the following topics and prepare a 5–7 minute presentation (or a short report). Support your talk with information from the text and examples from different countries or fields.

1. The Gut Microbiome as a Tool for Cancer Prognosis and Treatment

Discuss how the findings from the Oregon State University study could change veterinary oncology. Analyze the potential implications for pet owners and

explore whether this research can serve as a model for developing new cancer treatments in human medicine. Consider what further steps are needed to turn these findings into practical applications.

2. Rising Rates of Cancer: A Comparative Analysis

Explore the factors contributing to the increase in cancer diagnoses mentioned in the article. Compare the reasons for rising rates in dogs (e.g., better veterinary care) with those for humans (e.g., lifestyle, environmental factors). Discuss the challenges of funding such studies and the importance of early diagnosis for improving survival rates in both species.

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КОМАНОВА Алла Юрьевна
СИНИЦЫНА Ирина Андреевна
ЧИЖИКОВА Светлана Николаевна

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