

Researchers Study Birth Control Pills for Dogs

Texas A & M University has begun testing oral contraceptives on wild animals, which could lead to approval for use on pets.

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Texas A& M University recently started testing oral contraceptives on wild animals – cougars and feral pigs – however researchers say that, if successful, the contraceptives could be used to control cat and dog populations.

Animals ingest the birth control pills through baited food and so far, the results are promising, said Duane Kraemer, a professor in veterinary physiology and pharmacology. The contraceptive must be eaten daily for a certain period of time; however, it may be encapsulated to reduce the consumption frequency.

“This approach inhibits maturation of the egg and therefore prevents fertilization,” he explained. “The animals continue to cycle, so it will not yet be ideal for many pet owners. But there is an advantage for use in wild and feral animals.”

Upon further testing and perfection, the pill may eventually be available for domestic pets, Kraemer said.

“The need for such an animal contraceptive is certainly there,” Kraemer noted.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and private donations are funding the \$90,000 project.