

# CLINICAL SIGNS OF SWINE FEVER

## Clinical Signs:

The clinical signs of Classical and African Swine Fever are indistinguishable

### Acute:

- Pigs may die after a short febrile illness and before other clinical signs develop
- Pigs become depressed, recumbent, have difficulty breathing, stop eating, and huddle together
- Fever (41°C), cyanotic skin haemorrhages (especially at extremities), conjunctivitis, anorexia, ataxia, paresis, convulsions, sometimes vomiting, diarrhoea or constipation
- Death usually occurs within 5-15 days after clinical signs develop
- Mortality depends on the virulence of strain and age of the animal, with young animals being more vulnerable than adults

### Chronic:

- Initial signs are similar to acute infection and progress to non-specific signs (intermittent fever, chronic enteritis, wasting)
- Skin haemorrhages are absent
- Death after several months of disease (virus is constantly shed)

### Congenital:

- Abortion, resorption, mummification, and stillbirth of piglets
- Surviving piglets may be clinically normal at birth but are consistently viraemic and shed the virus until death
- Weakness, tremor and poor growth sometimes leading to death



Skin haemorrhages



Huddling and cyanotic haemorrhages of ears



Ataxia and diarrhoea



Abortion and mummified foetuses

Photos courtesy of: Plum Island Animal Disease Centre, Veterinary Laboratories Agency, Weybridge and Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University, College of Veterinary Medicine

## Pathological Findings

### Acute:

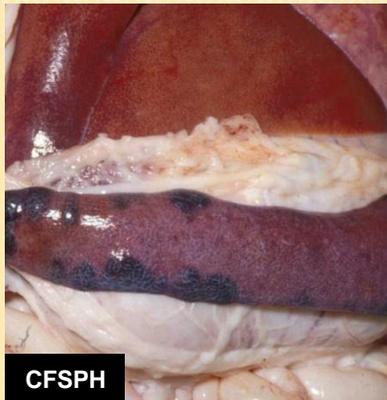
- No lesions if death occurs soon after infection
- Enlarged and haemorrhagic lymph nodes
- Necrotic foci in the tonsils (CSF)
- Encephalomyelitis (CSF)
- Multi-focal infarctions along the margin of the spleen (CSF)
- Enlarged haemorrhagic and friable spleen (ASF)
- Widespread haemorrhage in skin, lymph nodes, larynx, bladder, kidney, ileocaecal junction

### Chronic:

- Button ulcers in caecum and large intestines (CSF)
- Generalized depletion of lymph tissue
- Haemorrhagic lesions often absent



Haemorrhages in the tonsils



Infarcts in the spleen (CSF)



Haemorrhages in the lymph nodes



Haemorrhages in the kidney



Enlarged haemorrhagic spleen (ASF)

## Differential Diagnosis

The following diseases have similar gross pathology and laboratory differential diagnosis is essential:

- Porcine Dermatitis Nephropathy Syndrome, Post-weaning Multisystemic Wasting Syndrome
  - Bovine Viral Diarrhoea, Aujeszky's Disease, Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome
- Bacterial diseases (e.g. erysipelas, salmonellosis, pasteurellosis) usually respond to antimicrobials and have lower morbidity and mortality rates.

*Photos courtesy of: Plum Island Animal Disease Centre, VLA Weybridge and Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University, College of Veterinary Medicine*