FLASH VetID™ BFDV

The virus can spread before feathers change



Fast test for the qualitative detection of DNA of beak and feather disease virus (BFDV) in whole blood of the bird.

40 minutes	50 µL EDTA whole blood	Room temperature	12 months
TOTAL ASSAY TIME	SAMPLE	STORAGE	SHELF LIFE (FROM MFG)

Detects beak and feather disease virus DNA

Blood sample is ideal for screening healthy-looking birds, acute infections, and confirming carrier status

Clinical suspicion:

- Young psittacines with acute lethargy or sudden deterioration, even before feather or beak lesions appear
- Progressive feather dystrophy: retained sheaths, clubbed feathers, shaft haemorrhage, or failure to regrow after moult
- Loss of powder down or progressive beak elongation or fracture, particularly in cockatoos
- African grey parrots with unexplained anaemia or sudden death despite little visible feather change
- Recurrent bacterial or fungal infections, chronic wasting or poor recovery from otherwise routine illness suggest virus-associated immunosuppression

Screening / prevention programs:

- First presentation when BFDV status is unknown and an isolation decision is needed
- Before introducing a new bird into an aviary or household with young or susceptible psittacines
- Quarantine, pre-/post-purchase assessment, or after contact with a BFDV-positive bird
- Clinically normal breeding or exposed birds, to catch infection before disease becomes apparent



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The Pathogen and Transmission

Beak and feather disease virus (BFDV) is a small, non-enveloped, single-stranded DNA virus of the family Circoviridae, targeting rapidly dividing cells in feather follicles, the beak, and immune tissues. It sheds heavily in feather dander, faeces, and oral or crop secretions, spreading by inhalation, ingestion and contaminated fomites. Contaminated cages, nest boxes, and equipment can remain an infection source. Clinically normal carriers can seed a collection before disease becomes visible.

Species-Specific Manifestations

Clinical expression varies markedly by species and age. Cockatoos classically develop chronic, progressive loss of powder down and symmetrical feather dystrophy, with beak elongation or fracture in advanced disease. African grey parrots can instead develop an acute systemic form dominated by severe anaemia, leukopenia or pancytopenia, hepatic disease, and sudden death, sometimes before any feather lesions appear. Eclectus parrots, lovebirds and lorikeets may show acute or chronic disease with feather abnormalities of variable severity, while some infected birds remain clinically inapparent. This variability makes visual diagnosis unreliable.

The Diagnostic Value Proposition

Because BFDV can be clinically silent before feather or beak lesions appear, visual diagnosis is unreliable, and any lesions present can equally result from APV, trauma or nutritional disease. Detecting viral DNA in whole blood gives molecular evidence of systemic infection from a routine sample, without the contamination risk of handling feather or dander specimens. A same-visit result supports quarantine and breeding decisions and helps distinguish BFDV from APV.

+ Positive Result

Confirms BFDV DNA and strongly supports systemic infection. Isolate the bird, strengthen dust and fomite control, and avoid introduction into breeding or BFDV-negative groups.

– Negative Result

Makes circulating infection less likely at sampling; retest if suspicion remains high.

Gold-standard confirmation

For breeding collections, outbreaks or discordant cases, confirm with the reference-laboratory test; feather-follicle histopathology can add confirmation in birds with lesions.

Differential diagnostics

Test in parallel with FLASH VetID™ APV.