

# Paws for Effect - The PolyTrak Newsletter

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## **DR. LESLIE LYONS CONDUCTS SEMINAR IN MOSCOW, RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**(Contributed By Polina Shevtsova & PolyTrak Staff)**

**D**r. Leslie Lyons, PhD, Assistant Professor at UC Davis, California recently presented a seminar on genetics in Moscow, Russian Federation and later in Arnhem, Holland. Dr. Lyons works under “The Lyon’s Den”. The Lyons' Den is the feline and comparative genetics laboratory of Dr. Leslie A. Lyons in the [Department of Population Health & Reproduction](#) in the [University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine](#). The research focus of the Lyons' Den is the genetics of the domestic cat and the development of genetic tools and resources that assist gene mapping in the cat and other companion animals. Comparative maps are being developed for the cat, dog and horse. Feline research is focused on the discovery of mutations that cause inherited diseases and phenotypic traits and in the population dynamics of breed development and domestic cat evolution. Her Web address is: <http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/phr/lyonsden/>.

Polina Shevtsova ([Oldy Goody Cattery](#)) recently attended Sodruzhestvo cat show in Moscow, Russian Federation. Polina’s comments from this show: “I was as a guest there, but I was lucky enough to attend Leslie Lyons' seminar on genetics. It was very interesting and Leslie turned out to be a very nice person. I was along with my friend-breeders who were very suspicious about polydactyly and its possibility to harm a cat's health (they just didn't believe me that there was no harm in it according to the

latest research). I asked Leslie about this out loud and got a clear answer that, **Pd gene is absolutely harmless even when homozygous and has nothing in common with Rh gene.** You should see the faces of my friends that moment! They could hardly believe their ears! I felt such a triumph and relief myself!” 😊

“Dr. Lyons made a short overview of cats genetics and mostly answered the questions of our breeders. So, our conversation was rather short. I asked and was answered the following:

- 1) If Pd gene and Rh gene are the same? - NO, these are two different genes, not interrelated.
- 2) If Pd gene lethal or semi-lethal when homozygous? - NO, surprisingly NOT. No harm to cat's health.
- 3) If polydactyly has a polygenetic inheriting structure? - The matter is to be investigated. The only thing discovered up to now, is that Pd gene is one and the same for all cat breeds, but mutations of this gene are different in Pixiebobs, British cats and Maine Coons.”

“I've approached Dr. Lyons after the seminar, told her that I had a poly coon myself (she was somehow very happy about the fact, to my astonishment), told her about PolyTrak and PolyStandard also. She was interested but seemed having too little information on that. I'm glad that was improved!” 😊

Following the show and seminar, Dr. Lyons continued her travels in Europe collecting DNA sample swabs and visiting other venues. She arrived in Arnhem for the World Cat Congress Annual meeting and the Mundikat Cat show (FIFe) held on Easter Weekend.

