

FELINE ANTIBODY VARIANTS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to and the benefit of United States Provisional Patent Application 63/011491, filed April 17, 2020, which is incorporated by reference herein in its
5 entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The invention relates generally to feline antibody variants and uses thereof. Specifically, the invention relates to a mutation in the Fc constant region of feline antibody for improving half-life and other characteristics.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Feline IgG monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) are being developed as effective therapeutics in veterinary medicine. Several years ago, feline IgG subclasses were identified and characterized (Strietzel *et al.*, 2014, *Vet Immunol Immunopathol.*, vol. 158(3-4), pages 214-223). However, not much work has been done on extending the half-life of feline IgGs.

15 [0004] Through a recycling mechanism, the neonatal Fc receptor (FcRn) prolongs the half-life of an IgG in a pH-dependent interaction with its fragment crystallizable (Fc) region. Specifically, the Fc region spanning the interface of CH2 and CH3 domains interacts with the FcRn on the surface of cells to regulate IgG homeostasis. This interaction is favored by an acidic interaction after IgG pinocytosis and thus IgG is protected from degradation. The
20 endocytosed IgG is then recycled back to the cell surface and released into the blood stream at an alkaline pH thereby maintaining sufficient serum IgG for proper function. Accordingly, the pharmacokinetic profile of IgGs depend on to the structural and functional properties of their Fc regions.

[0005] Three feline IgG subclasses bind feline FcRn and have been compared to human IgG
25 analogues. Half-life of feline IgG remains to be fully studied because, without any experimental support, one cannot expect or predict whether or not they will align closely with human IgGs.

[0006] Extended half-life of IgG could allow less frequent dosing and/or lower dose of the antibody drug, which in turn reduces veterinary visits, improves patient compliance, and lowers the concentration-dependent cytotoxicity/adverse events.

[0007] Accordingly, there exists a need to identify mutations in the Fc constant regions to
5 improve half-life.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The invention relates to mutant feline IgGs that provide higher FcRn affinity and higher half-life, relative to wild-type feline IgGs. Specifically, the inventors of the instant application have found that substituting the amino acid residue serine (Ser or S) at position 428 or 434 with
10 another amino acid surprisingly and unexpectedly enhanced the affinity to FcRn, and thereby increased the half-life of IgG.

[0009] In one aspect, the invention provides a modified IgG comprising: a feline IgG constant domain comprising at least one amino acid substitution relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said substitution is at amino acid residue 428 or 434, numbered
15 according to the EU index as in Kabat. In an exemplary embodiment, said substitution is a substitution of the serine at position 428 with leucine (S428L). In another exemplary embodiment, said substitution is a substitution of the serine at position 434 with histidine (S434H). In some embodiments, the feline IgG constant domain comprises substitutions of serines at both 428 and 434 positions with leucine and histidine, respectively.

20 [00010] In another aspect, the invention provides a polypeptide comprising: a feline IgG constant domain comprising one or more amino acid substitutions relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said one or more substitutions are at amino acid residues 428, 434, or a combination thereof.

25 [00011] In yet another aspect, the invention provides an antibody or a molecule comprising: a feline IgG constant domain comprising one or more amino acid substitutions relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said one or more substitutions are at amino acid residues 428, 434, or a combination thereof.

[00012] In a further aspect, the invention provides a method for producing or manufacturing an antibody or a molecule, the method comprising: providing a vector or a host cell having an
30 antibody comprising a feline IgG constant domain, said feline IgG constant domain comprising

one or more amino acid substitutions relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said one or more substitutions are at amino acid residues 428, 434, or a combination thereof.

5 [00013] In another aspect, the invention provides a method for increasing an antibody serum half-life in a cat, the method comprising: administering said cat a therapeutically effective amount of an antibody comprising a feline IgG constant domain, said feline IgG constant domain comprising one or more amino acid substitutions relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said one or more substitutions are at amino acid residues 428, 434, or a combination thereof.

10 [00014] Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description examples and figures. It should be understood, however, that the detailed description and the specific examples while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this
15 detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[00015] The patent or application file contains at least one drawing executed in color. Copies of this patent or patent application publication with color drawing(s) will be provided by the Office upon request and payment of the necessary fee.

20 [00016] FIG. 1 illustrates domain structure of IgG. Fc mutations S428L and/or N434H were made in the CH3 domain to increase IgG half-life by increasing affinity to FcRn at pH6

[00017] FIG. 2A shows the alignment of the amino acid sequences of wild-type (WT) human IgG1, WT feline IgG1a, WT feline IgG1b, WT feline IgG2 and mutant feline IgG2 having hinge mutation. The amino acid residues are numbered according to the Eu index as in Kabat.
25 The CH1, hinge, CH2, and CH3 amino acid residues are in red, violet, blue, and green, respectively. FIG. 2B shows feline Fc IgG1a WT nucleotide sequence. FIG. 2C shows feline Fc IgG1a S434H nucleotide sequence. FIG. 2D shows feline Fc IgG1a S428L nucleotide sequence.

[00018] FIG. 3 shows individual serum concentrations for WT mAb1 IgG in 8 cats, 4 male (G00397, G00398, G00399, G00400) and 4 female (G00425, G00426, G00427, G00428) after three injections of 2mg/kg (SC/SC/IV) measured over a 98 day period.

[00019] FIG. 4 shows individual serum concentrations for WT mAb1 IgG in 8 cats, 4 male
5 (G00417, G00418, G00419, G00420) and 4 female (G00445, G00446, G00447, G0448) after three injections of 2mg/kg (SC/SC/IV) measured over a 98 day period.

[00020] FIG. 5 shows individual serum concentrations for WT mAb2 in 3 cats after a single subcutaneous injection of 2mg/kg measured over a 30 day period.

[00021] FIG. 6 shows individual serum concentrations for mutant S428L mAb2 in 3cats after
10 a single subcutaneous injection of 2mg/kg measured over a 30 day period.

[00022] FIG. 7 shows individual serum concentrations for WT mAb3 IgG in 8 cats, 4 male (G00453, G00454, G00455, G00456) and 4 female (G00457, G00458, G00459, G00460) after three injections of 2mg/kg (SC/SC/IV) measured over a 98 day period.

[00023] FIG. 8 shows individual serum concentrations for S434H mAb3 IgG in 8 cats, 4 male
15 (G00469, G00470, G00471, G00472) and 4 female (G00473, G00474, G00475, G0476) after three injections of 2mg/kg (SC/SC/IV) measured over a 98 day period.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEQUENCE LISTING

[00024] SEQ ID NO.: 1 is the amino acid sequence of the mutant IgG1a constant domain having S428L mutation.

20 [00025] SEQ ID NO.: 2 is the amino acid sequence of the mutant IgG1a constant domain having S434H mutation.

[00026] SEQ ID NO.: 3 is the amino acid sequence of the wildtype IgG1a constant domain.

[00027] SEQ ID NO.: 4 is the nucleic acid sequence of the wildtype IgG1a constant domain.

[00028] SEQ ID NO.: 5 is the amino acid sequence of IgG1a CH1 domain.

25 [00029] SEQ ID NO.: 6 is the amino acid sequence of IgG1a hinge domain.

[00030] SEQ ID NO.: 7 is the amino acid sequence of IgG1a CH2 domain.

[00031] SEQ ID NO.: 8 is the amino acid sequence of IgG1a WT CH3 domain.

[00032] SEQ ID NO.: 9 is the nucleic acid sequence of IgG1a CH1 domain.

[00033] SEQ ID NO.: 10 is the nucleic acid sequence of IgG1a hinge domain.

[00034] SEQ ID NO.: 11 is the nucleic acid sequence of IgG1a CH2 domain.

[00035] SEQ ID NO.: 12 is the nucleic acid sequence of IgG1a WT CH3 domain.

- 5 [00036] SEQ ID NO.: 13 is the nucleic acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Heavy Chain Variable Region.

[00037] SEQ ID NO.: 14 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Heavy Chain Variable Region.

- 10 [00038] SEQ ID NO.: 15 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Heavy Chain Variable Region CDR1.

[00039] SEQ ID NO.: 16 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Heavy Chain Variable Region CDR2.

[00040] SEQ ID NO.: 17 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Heavy Chain Variable Region CDR3.

- 15 [00041] SEQ ID NO.: 18 is the nucleic acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Light Chain Variable Region.

[00042] SEQ ID NO.: 19 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Light Chain Variable Region.

- 20 [00043] SEQ ID NO.: 20 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Light Chain Variable Region CDR1.

[00044] SEQ ID NO.: 21 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Light Chain Variable Region CDR2.

[00045] SEQ ID NO.: 22 is the amino acid sequence of anti-IL31 antibody (ZTS-5864) Light Chain Variable Region CDR3.

- 25 [00046] SEQ ID NO.: 23 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Heavy chain.

[00047] SEQ ID NO.: 24 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Heavy chain CDR1.

[00048] SEQ ID NO.: 25 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Heavy chain CDR2.

[00049] SEQ ID NO.: 26 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Heavy chain CDR3.

5 [00050] SEQ ID NO.: 27 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Light chain.

[00051] SEQ ID NO.: 28 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Light chain CDR1.

10 [00052] SEQ ID NO.: 29 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Light chain CDR2.

[00053] SEQ ID NO.: 30 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (ZTS768) Light chain CDR3.

[00054] SEQ ID NO.: 31 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Heavy chain.

15 [00055] SEQ ID NO.: 32 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Heavy chain CDR1.

[00056] SEQ ID NO.: 33 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Heavy chain CDR2.

20 [00057] SEQ ID NO.: 34 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Heavy chain CDR3.

[00058] SEQ ID NO.: 35 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Kappa chain.

[00059] SEQ ID NO.: 36 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Kappa chain CDR1.

25 [00060] SEQ ID NO.: 37 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Kappa chain CDR2.

[00061] SEQ ID NO.: 38 is the amino acid sequence of anti-NGF antibody (NV02) Kappa chain CDR3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[00062] The present subject matter may be understood more readily by reference to the following detailed description which forms a part of this disclosure. It is to be understood that this invention is not limited to the specific products, methods, conditions or parameters
5 described and/or shown herein, and that the terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments by way of example only and is not intended to be limiting of the claimed invention.

[00063] Unless otherwise defined herein, scientific and technical terms used in connection with the present application shall have the meanings that are commonly understood by those of
10 ordinary skill in the art. Further, unless otherwise required by context, singular terms shall include pluralities and plural terms shall include the singular.

[00064] As employed above and throughout the disclosure, the following terms and abbreviations, unless otherwise indicated, shall be understood to have the following meanings.

Definitions

15 [00065] In the present disclosure the singular forms "a," "an," and "the" include the plural reference, and reference to a particular numerical value includes at least that particular value, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. Thus, for example, a reference to "a molecule" or "a compound" is a reference to one or more of such molecules or compounds and equivalents thereof known to those skilled in the art, and so forth. The term "plurality", as used herein,
20 means more than one. When a range of values is expressed, another embodiment includes from the one particular and/or to the other particular value. Similarly, when values are expressed as approximations, by use of the antecedent "about," it is understood that the particular value forms another embodiment. All ranges are inclusive and combinable.

[00066] In the specification and claims, the numbering of the amino acid residues in an
25 immunoglobulin heavy chain is that of the Eu index as in Kabat *et al.*, Sequences of Proteins of Immunological Interest, 5th Ed. Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md. (1991). The "Eu index as in Kabat" refers to the residue numbering of the IgG antibody and is reflected herein in FIG. 2A.

[00067] The term "isolated" when used in relation to a nucleic acid is a nucleic acid that is
30 identified and separated from at least one contaminant nucleic acid with which it is ordinarily associated in its natural source. Isolated nucleic acid is in a form or setting different from that in which it is found in nature. Isolated nucleic acid molecules therefore are distinguished from

the nucleic acid molecule as it exists in natural cells. An isolated nucleic acid molecule includes a nucleic acid molecule contained in cells that ordinarily express the polypeptide encoded therein where, for example, the nucleic acid molecule is in a plasmid or a chromosomal location different from that of natural cells. The isolated nucleic acid may be present in single-stranded or double-stranded form. When an isolated nucleic acid molecule is to be utilized to express a protein, the oligonucleotide or polynucleotide will contain at a minimum the sense or coding strand, but may contain both the sense and anti-sense strands (i.e., may be double-stranded).

[00068] A nucleic acid molecule is "operably linked" or "operably attached" when it is placed into a functional relationship with another nucleic acid molecule. For example, a promoter or enhancer is operably linked to a coding sequence of nucleic acid if it affects the transcription of the sequence; or a ribosome binding site is operably linked to a coding sequence of nucleic acid if it is positioned so as to facilitate translation. A nucleic acid molecule encoding a variant Fc region is operably linked to a nucleic acid molecule encoding a heterologous protein (i.e., a protein or functional fragment thereof which does not, as it exists in nature, comprise an Fc region) if it is positioned such that the expressed fusion protein comprises the heterologous protein or functional fragment thereof adjoined either upstream or downstream to the variant Fc region polypeptide; the heterologous protein may be immediately adjacent to the variant Fc region polypeptide or may be separated therefrom by a linker sequence of any length and composition. Likewise, a polypeptide (used synonymously herein with "protein") molecule is "operably linked" or "operably attached" when it is placed into a functional relationship with another polypeptide.

[00069] As used herein the term "functional fragment" when in reference to a polypeptide or protein (e.g., a variant Fc region, or a monoclonal antibody) refers to fragments of that protein which retain at least one function of the full-length polypeptide. The fragments may range in size from six amino acids to the entire amino acid sequence of the full-length polypeptide minus one amino acid. A functional fragment of a variant Fc region polypeptide of the present invention retains at least one "amino acid substitution" as herein defined. A functional fragment of a variant Fc region polypeptide retains at least one function known in the art to be associated with the Fc region (e.g., ADCC, CDC, Fc receptor binding, C1q binding, down regulation of cell surface receptors or may, e.g., increase the in vivo or in vitro half-life of a polypeptide to which it is operably attached).

[00070] The term "purified" or "purify" refers to the substantial removal of at least one contaminant from a sample. For example, an antigen-specific antibody may be purified by

complete or substantial removal (at least 90%, 91%, 92%, 93%, 94%, 95%, or more preferably at least 96%, 97%, 98% or 99%) of at least one contaminating non-immunoglobulin protein; it may also be purified by the removal of immunoglobulin protein that does not bind to the same antigen. The removal of non-immunoglobulin proteins and/or the removal of immunoglobulins that do not bind a particular antigen results in an increase in the percent of antigen-specific immunoglobulins in the sample. In another example, a polypeptide (e.g., an immunoglobulin) expressed in bacterial host cells is purified by the complete or substantial removal of host cell proteins; the percent of the polypeptide is thereby increased in the sample.

[00071] The term "native" as it refers to a polypeptide (e.g., Fc region) is used herein to indicate that the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence consisting of the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide as it commonly occurs in nature or a naturally occurring polymorphism thereof. A native polypeptide (e.g., native Fc region) may be produced by recombinant means or may be isolated from a naturally occurring source.

[00072] The term "expression vector" as used herein refers to a recombinant DNA molecule containing a desired coding sequence and appropriate nucleic acid sequences necessary for the expression of the operably linked coding sequence in a particular host organism.

[00073] As used herein, the term "host cell" refers to any eukaryotic or prokaryotic cell (e.g., bacterial cells such as E. coli, CHO cells, yeast cells, mammalian cells, avian cells, amphibian cells, plant cells, fish cells, and insect cells), whether located in vitro or in situ, or in vivo

[00074] As used herein, the term "Fc region" refers to a C-terminal region of an immunoglobulin heavy chain. The "Fc region" may be a native sequence Fc region or a variant Fc region. Although the generally accepted boundaries of the Fc region of an immunoglobulin heavy chain might vary, the feline IgG heavy chain Fc region is usually defined to stretch, for example, from an amino acid residue at position 231, to the carboxyl-terminus thereof. In some embodiments, variants comprise only portions of the Fc region and can include or not include the carboxy-terminus. The Fc region of an immunoglobulin generally comprises two constant domains, CH2 and CH3. In some embodiments, variants having one or more of the constant domains are contemplated. In other embodiments, variants without such constant domains (or with only portions of such constant domains) are contemplated.

[00075] The "CH2 domain" of a feline IgG Fc region usually extends, for example, from about amino acid 231 to about amino acid 340 (see FIG. 2A). The CH2 domain is unique in that it is

not closely paired with another domain. Two N-linked branched carbohydrate chains are interposed between the two CH2 domains of an intact native IgG molecule.

[00076] The "CH3 domain" of a feline IgG Fc region generally is the stretch of residues C-terminal to a CH2 domain in an Fc region extending, for example, from about amino acid
5 residue 341 to about amino acid residue 447 (see FIG. 2A).

[00077] A "functional Fc region" possesses an "effector function" of a native sequence Fc region. At least one effector function of a polypeptide comprising a variant Fc region of the present invention may be enhanced or diminished with respect to a polypeptide comprising a native Fc region or the parent Fc region of the variant. Examples of effector functions include,
10 but are not limited to: Clq binding; complement dependent cytotoxicity (CDC); Fc receptor binding; antibody-dependent cell-mediated cytotoxicity (ADCC); phagocytosis; down regulation of cell surface receptors (e.g., B cell receptor; BCR), etc. Such effector functions may require the Fc region to be operably linked to a binding domain (e.g., an antibody variable domain) and can be assessed using various assays (e.g., Fc binding assay, ADCC assays, CDC
15 assays, target cell depletion from whole or fractionated blood samples, etc.).

[00078] A "native sequence Fc region" or "wild type Fc region" refers to an amino acid sequence that is identical to the amino acid sequence of an Fc region commonly found in nature. Exemplary native sequence feline Fc regions are shown in FIG. 2A and include, for example, a native sequence of feline IgG1a Fc region.

20 [00079] A "variant Fc region" comprises an amino acid sequence that differs from that of a native sequence Fc region (or fragment thereof) by virtue of at least one "amino acid substitution" as defined herein. In preferred embodiments, the variant Fc region has at least one amino acid substitution compared to a native sequence Fc region or in the Fc region of a parent polypeptide, preferably 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 amino acid substitutions in a native sequence Fc region
25 or in the Fc region of the parent polypeptide. In an alternative embodiment, a variant Fc region may be generated according to the methods herein disclosed and this variant Fc region can be fused to a heterologous polypeptide of choice, such as an antibody variable domain or a non-antibody polypeptide, e.g., binding domain of a receptor or ligand.

[00080] As used herein, the term "derivative" in the context of polypeptides refers to a
30 polypeptide that comprises an amino acid sequence which has been altered by introduction of an amino acid residue substitution. The term "derivative" as used herein also refers to a polypeptide which has been modified by the covalent attachment of any type of molecule to

the polypeptide. For example, but not by way of limitation, an antibody may be modified, e.g., by glycosylation, acetylation, pegylation, phosphorylation, amidation, derivatization by known protecting/blocking groups, proteolytic cleavage, linkage to a cellular ligand or other protein, etc. A derivative polypeptide may be produced by chemical modifications using techniques known to those of skill in the art, including, but not limited to specific chemical cleavage, acetylation, formylation, metabolic synthesis of tunicamycin, etc. Further, a derivative polypeptide possesses a similar or identical function as the polypeptide from which it was derived. It is understood that a polypeptide comprising a variant Fc region of the present invention may be a derivative as defined herein, preferably the derivatization occurs within the Fc region.

[00081] "Substantially of feline origin" as used herein in reference to a polypeptide (e.g., an Fc region or a monoclonal antibody), indicates the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence at least 80%, at least 85%, more preferably at least 90%, 91%, 92%, 93%, 94% or even more preferably at least 95%, 95%, 97%, 98% or 99% homologous to that of a native feline amino polypeptide.

[00082] The terms "Fc receptor" or "FcR" are used to describe a receptor that binds to an Fc region (e.g., the Fc region of an antibody). The preferred FcR is a native sequence FcR. Moreover, a preferred FcR is one which binds an IgG antibody (a gamma receptor) and includes receptors of the Fc gamma RI, Fc gamma RII, Fc gamma RIII subclasses, including allelic variants and alternatively spliced forms of these receptors. Another preferred FcR includes the neonatal receptor, FcRn, which is responsible for the transfer of maternal IgGs to the fetus (Guyer et al., J. Immunol. 117:587 (1976) and Kim et al., J. Immunol. 24:249 (1994)). Other FcRs, including those to be identified in the future, are encompassed by the term "FcR" herein.

[00083] The phrase "antibody-dependent cell-mediated cytotoxicity" and "ADCC" refer to a cell-mediated reaction in which nonspecific cytotoxic cells (e.g., nonspecific) that express FcRs (e.g., Natural Killer ("NK") cells, neutrophils, and macrophages) recognize bound antibody on a target cell and subsequently cause lysis of the target cells. The primary cells for mediating ADCC, NK cells, express Fc gamma RIII only, whereas monocytes express Fc gamma RI, Fc gamma RII and Fc gamma RIII.

[00084] As used herein, the phrase "effector cells" refers to leukocytes (preferably feline) which express one or more FcRs and perform effector functions. Preferably, the cells express at least Fc gamma RIII and perform ADCC effector function. Examples of leukocytes which mediate

ADCC include PBMC, NK cells, monocytes, cytotoxic T cells and neutrophils. The effector cells may be isolated from a native source (e.g., from blood or PBMCs).

[00085] A variant polypeptide with "altered" FcRn binding affinity is one which has either enhanced (i.e., increased, greater or higher) or diminished (i.e., reduced, decreased or lesser)

5 FcRn binding affinity compared to the variant's parent polypeptide or to a polypeptide comprising a native Fc region when measured at pH 6.0. A variant polypeptide which displays increased binding or increased binding affinity to an FcRn binds FcRn with greater affinity than the parent polypeptide. A variant polypeptide which displays decreased binding or decreased binding affinity to an FcRn, binds FcRn with lower affinity than its parent
10 polypeptide. Such variants which display decreased binding to an FcRn may possess little or no appreciable binding to an FcRn, e.g., 0-20% binding to the FcRn compared to a parent polypeptide. A variant polypeptide which binds an FcRn with "enhanced affinity" as compared to its parent polypeptide, is one which binds FcRn with higher binding affinity than the parent polypeptide, when the amounts of variant polypeptide and parent polypeptide in a binding
15 assay are essentially the same, and all other conditions are identical. For example, a variant polypeptide with enhanced FcRn binding affinity may display from about 1.10 fold to about 100 fold (more typically from about 1.2 fold to about 50 fold) increase in FcRn binding affinity compared to the parent polypeptide, where FcRn binding affinity is determined, for example, in an ELISA assay or other method available to one of ordinary skill in the art.

20 [00086] As used herein, an "amino acid substitution" refers to the replacement of at least one existing amino acid residue in a given amino acid sequence with another different "replacement" amino acid residue. The replacement residue or residues may be "naturally occurring amino acid residues" (i.e., encoded by the genetic code) and selected from: alanine (Ala); arginine (Arg); asparagine (Asn); aspartic acid (Asp); cysteine (Cys); glutamine (Gln);
25 glutamic acid (Glu); glycine (Gly); histidine (His); isoleucine (Ile); leucine (Leu); lysine (Lys); methionine (Met); phenylalanine (Phe); proline (Pro); serine (Ser); threonine (Thr); tryptophan (Trp); tyrosine (Tyr); and valine (Val). Substitution with one or more non-naturally occurring amino acid residues is also encompassed by the definition of an amino acid substitution herein. A "non-naturally occurring amino acid residue" refers to a residue, other than those naturally
30 occurring amino acid residues listed above, which is able to covalently bind adjacent amino acid residues (s) in a polypeptide chain. Examples of non-naturally occurring amino acid residues include norleucine, ornithine, norvaline, homoserine and other amino acid residue analogues such as those described in Ellman et al. Meth. Enzym. 202: 301-336 (1991).

[00087] The term "assay signal" refers to the output from any method of detecting protein-protein interactions, including but not limited to, absorbance measurements from colorimetric assays, fluorescent intensity, or disintegrations per minute. Assay formats could include ELISA, facs, or other methods. A change in the "assay signal" may reflect a change in cell viability and/or a change in the kinetic off-rate, the kinetic on-rate, or both. A "higher assay signal" refers to the measured output number being larger than another number (e.g., a variant may have a higher (larger) measured number in an ELISA assay as compared to the parent polypeptide). A "lower" assay signal refers to the measured output number being smaller than another number (e.g., a variant may have a lower (smaller) measured number in an ELISA assay as compared to the parent polypeptide).

[00088] The term "binding affinity" refers to the equilibrium dissociation constant (expressed in units of concentration) associated with each Fc receptor-Fc binding interaction. The binding affinity is directly related to the ratio of the kinetic off-rate (generally reported in units of inverse time, e.g., seconds⁻¹) divided by the kinetic on-rate (generally reported in units of concentration per unit time, e.g., molar/second). In general it is not possible to unequivocally state whether changes in equilibrium dissociation constants are due to differences in on-rates, off-rates or both unless each of these parameters are experimentally determined (e.g., by BIACORE or SAPIDYNE measurements).

[00089] As used herein, the term "hinge region" refers to the stretch of amino acids, for example, in feline IgG1a (e.g. stretching from position 216 to position 230 of feline IgG1a). Hinge regions of other IgG isotypes may be aligned with the IgG sequence by placing the first and last cysteine residues forming inter-heavy chain disulfide (S—S) bonds in the same positions.

[00090] "Clq" is a polypeptide that includes a binding site for the Fc region of an immunoglobulin. Clq together with two serine proteases, Clr and Cls, forms the complex Cl, the first component of the CDC pathway.

[00091] As used herein, the term "antibody" is used interchangeably with "immunoglobulin" or "Ig," is used in the broadest sense and specifically covers monoclonal antibodies (including full length monoclonal antibodies), polyclonal antibodies, multispecific antibodies (e.g., bispecific antibodies), and antibody fragments so long as they exhibit the desired biological activity or functional activity. Single chain antibodies, and chimeric, feline, or felinized antibodies, as well as chimeric or CDR-grafted single chain antibodies, and the like, comprising portions derived from different species, are also encompassed by the present invention and the

term "antibody". The various portions of these antibodies can be joined together chemically by conventional techniques, synthetically, or can be prepared as a contiguous protein using genetic engineering techniques. For example, nucleic acids encoding a chimeric or humanized chain can be expressed to produce a contiguous protein. See, e.g., U.S. Pat. No. 4,816,567; U.S. Pat. No. 4,816,397; WO 86/01533; U.S. Pat. No. 5,225,539; and U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,585,089 and 5,698,762. See also, Newman, R. et al. *BioTechnology*, 10: 1455-1460, 1993, regarding humanized antibody, and Ladner et al., U.S. Pat. No. 4,946,778 and Bird, R. E. et al., *Science*, 242:423-426, 1988, regarding single chain antibodies. It is understood that all forms of the antibodies comprising an Fc region (or portion thereof) are encompassed herein within the term "antibody." Furthermore, the antibody may be labeled with a detectable label, immobilized on a solid phase and/or conjugated with a heterologous compound (e.g., an enzyme or toxin) according to methods known in the art.

[00092] As used herein, the term "antibody fragments" refers to a portion of an intact antibody. Examples of antibody fragments include, but are not limited to, linear antibodies; single-chain antibody molecules; Fc or Fc' peptides, Fab and Fab fragments, and multispecific antibodies formed from antibody fragments. The antibody fragments preferably retain at least part of the hinge and optionally the CH1 region of an IgG heavy chain. In other preferred embodiments, the antibody fragments comprise at least a portion of the CH2 region or the entire CH2 region.

[00093] As used herein, the term "functional fragment", when used in reference to a monoclonal antibody, is intended to refer to a portion of the monoclonal antibody that still retains a functional activity. A functional activity can be, for example, antigen binding activity or specificity, receptor binding activity or specificity, effector function activity and the like. Monoclonal antibody functional fragments include, for example, individual heavy or light chains and fragments thereof, such as VL, VH and Fd; monovalent fragments, such as Fv, Fab, and Fab'; bivalent fragments such as F(ab')₂; single chain Fv (scFv); and Fc fragments. Such terms are described in, for example, Harlowe and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, New York (1989); *Molec. Biology and Biotechnology: A Comprehensive Desk Reference* (Myers, R. A. (ed.), New York: VCH Publisher, Inc.); Huston et al., *Cell Biophysics*, 22:189-224 (1993); Pluckthun and Skerra, *Meth. Enzymol.*, 178:497-515 (1989) and in Day, E. D., *Advanced Immunochemistry*, Second Ed., Wiley-Liss, Inc., New York, N.Y. (1990). The term functional fragment is intended to include, for example, fragments produced by protease digestion or reduction of a monoclonal antibody and by recombinant DNA methods known to those skilled in the art.

[00094] As used herein, the term "fragment" refers to a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of at least 5, 15, 20, 25, 40, 50, 70, 90, 100 or more contiguous amino acid residues of the amino acid sequence of another polypeptide. In a preferred embodiment, a fragment of a polypeptide retains at least one function of the full-length polypeptide.

5 [00095] As used herein, the term "chimeric antibody" includes monovalent, divalent or polyvalent immunoglobulins. A monovalent chimeric antibody is a dimer formed by a chimeric heavy chain associated through disulfide bridges with a chimeric light chain. A divalent chimeric antibody is a tetramer formed by two heavy chain-light chain dimers associated through at least one disulfide bridge. A chimeric heavy chain of an antibody for use
10 in feline comprises an antigen-binding region derived from the heavy chain of a non-feline antibody, which is linked to at least a portion of a feline heavy chain constant region, such as CH1 or CH2. A chimeric light chain of an antibody for use in feline comprises an antigen binding region derived from the light chain of a non-feline antibody, linked to at least a portion of a feline light chain constant region (CL). Antibodies, fragments or derivatives having
15 chimeric heavy chains and light chains of the same or different variable region binding specificity, can also be prepared by appropriate association of the individual polypeptide chains, according to known method steps. With this approach, hosts expressing chimeric heavy chains are separately cultured from hosts expressing chimeric light chains, and the immunoglobulin chains are separately recovered and then associated. Alternatively, the hosts
20 can be co-cultured and the chains allowed to associate spontaneously in the culture medium, followed by recovery of the assembled immunoglobulin or fragment or both the heavy and light chains can be expressed in the same host cell. Methods for producing chimeric antibodies are well known in the art (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,284,471; 5,807,715; 4,816,567; and 4,816,397).

25 [00096] As used herein, "felinized" forms of non-feline (e.g., murine) antibodies (i.e., felinized antibodies) are antibodies that contain minimal sequence, or no sequence, derived from non-feline immunoglobulin. For the most part, felinized antibodies are feline immunoglobulins (recipient antibody) in which residues from a hypervariable region of the recipient are replaced by residues from a hypervariable region of a non-feline species (donor antibody) such as
30 mouse, rat, rabbit, human or nonhuman primate having the desired specificity, affinity, and capacity. In some instances, framework region (FR) residues of the feline immunoglobulin are replaced by corresponding non-feline residues. Furthermore, felinized antibodies may comprise residues that are not found in the recipient antibody or in the donor antibody. These

modifications are generally made to further refine antibody performance. In general, the felinized antibody will comprise substantially all of at least one, and typically two, variable domains, in which all or substantially all of the hypervariable loops (CDRs) correspond to those of a non-feline immunoglobulin and all or substantially all of the FR residues are those of a feline immunoglobulin sequence. The felinized antibody may also comprise at least a portion of an immunoglobulin constant region (Fc), typically that of a feline immunoglobulin.

[00097] As used herein, the term "immunoadhesin" designates antibody-like molecules which combine the binding domain of a heterologous "adhesin" protein (e.g., a receptor, ligand or enzyme) with an immunoglobulin constant domain. Structurally, immunoadhesins comprise a fusion of the adhesin amino acid sequence with the desired binding specificity which is other than the antigen recognition and binding site (antigen combining site) of an antibody (i.e., is "heterologous") with an immunoglobulin constant domain sequence.

[00098] As used herein, the term "ligand binding domain" refers to any native receptor or any region or derivative thereof retaining at least a qualitative ligand binding ability of a corresponding native receptor. In certain embodiments, the receptor is from a cell-surface polypeptide having an extracellular domain that is homologous to a member of the immunoglobulin supergenefamily. Other receptors, which are not members of the immunoglobulin supergenefamily but are nonetheless specifically covered by this definition, are receptors for cytokines, and in particular receptors with tyrosine kinase activity (receptor tyrosine kinases), members of the hematopoietin and nerve growth factor receptor superfamilies, and cell adhesion molecules (e.g., E-, L-, and P-selectins).

[00099] As used herein, the term "receptor binding domain" refers to any native ligand for a receptor, including, e.g., cell adhesion molecules, or any region or derivative of such native ligand retaining at least a qualitative receptor binding ability of a corresponding native ligand.

[000100] As used herein, an "isolated" polypeptide is one that has been identified and separated and/or recovered from a component of its natural environment. Contaminant components of its natural environment are materials that would interfere with diagnostic or therapeutic uses for the polypeptide, and may include enzymes, hormones, and other proteinaceous or non-proteinaceous solutes. In certain embodiments, the isolated polypeptide is purified (1) to greater than 95% by weight of polypeptides as determined by the Lowry method, and preferably, more than 99% by weight, (2) to a degree sufficient to obtain at least 15 residues of N-terminal or internal amino acid sequence by use of a spinning cup sequenator, or (3) to

homogeneity by SDS-page under reducing or nonreducing conditions using Coomassie blue or silver stain. Isolated polypeptide includes the polypeptide in situ within recombinant cells since at least one component of the polypeptide's natural environment will not be present. Ordinarily, however, isolated polypeptide will be prepared by a least one purification step.

5 [000101] As used herein, the term "disorder" and "disease" are used interchangeably to refer to any condition that would benefit from treatment with a variant polypeptide (a polypeptide comprising a variant Fc region of the invention), including chronic and acute disorders or diseases (e.g., pathological conditions that predispose a patient to a particular disorder).

[000102] As used herein, the term "receptor" refers to a polypeptide capable of binding at least
10 one ligand. The preferred receptor is a cell-surface or soluble receptor having an extracellular ligand-binding domain and, optionally, other domains (e.g., transmembrane domain, intracellular domain and/or membrane anchor). A receptor to be evaluated in an assay described herein may be an intact receptor or a fragment or derivative thereof (e.g. a fusion protein comprising the binding domain of the receptor fused to one or more heterologous
15 polypeptides). Moreover, the receptor to be evaluated for its binding properties may be present in a cell or isolated and optionally coated on an assay plate or some other solid phase or labeled directly and used as a probe.

Feline Wildtype IgG

[000103] Feline IgGs are well known in the art and fully described, for example, in Strietzel *et al.*, 2014, *Vet Immunol Immunopathol.*, vol. 158(3-4), pages 214-223. In one embodiment, feline IgG is IgG1_a. In another embodiment, feline IgG is IgG1_b. In yet another embodiment, feline IgG is IgG2. In a particular embodiment, feline IgG is IgG1_a.

[000104] The amino acid and nucleic acid sequences of IgG1_a, IgG1_b, and IgG2 are also well known in the art.

25 [000105] In one example, IgG of the invention comprises a constant domain, for example, CH1, CH2, or CH3 domains, or a combination thereof. In another example, the constant domain of the invention comprises Fc region, including, for example, CH2 or CH3 domains or a combination thereof.

[000106] In a particular example, the wild-type constant domain comprises the amino acid
30 sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO.: 3. In some embodiments, the wild-type IgG constant domain is a homologue, a variant, an isomer, or a functional fragment of SEQ ID NO.: 3, but

without any mutation at position 428 or 434. Each possibility represents a separate embodiment of the present invention.

[000107] IgGs constant domains also include polypeptides with amino acid sequences substantially similar to the amino acid sequence of the heavy and/or light chain. Substantially
5 the same amino acid sequence is defined herein as a sequence with at least 70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 95%, or 99% identity to a compared amino acid sequence, as determined by the FASTA search method in accordance with Pearson and Lipman, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 85:2444-2448 (1988).

[000108] The present invention also includes nucleic acid molecules that encode IgGs or
10 portion thereof, described herein. In one embodiment, the nucleic acids may encode an antibody heavy chain comprising, for example, CH1, CH2, CH3 regions, or a combination thereof. In another embodiment, the nucleic acids may encode an antibody heavy chain comprising, for example, any one of the VH regions or a portion thereof, or any one of the VH CDRs, including any variants thereof. The invention also includes nucleic acid molecules that
15 encode an antibody light chain comprising, for example, any one of the CL regions or a portion thereof, any one of the VL regions or a portion thereof or any one of the VL CDRs, including any variants thereof. In certain embodiments, the nucleic acid encodes both a heavy and light chain, or portions thereof.

[000109] The amino acid sequence of the wild-type constant domain set forth in SEQ ID NO.:
20 3 is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence set forth in in SEQ ID NO.: 4.

Modified Feline IgG

[000110] The inventors of the instant application have found that substituting the amino acid residue serine (Ser or S) at position 428 or 434 with another amino acid surprisingly and unexpectedly enhanced the affinity to FcRn and increased the half-life of IgG. The terms,
25 position 428 or position 434, as used herein, refers to a position numbered according to the EU index as in Kabat (Kabat *et al.*, Sequences of Proteins of Immunological Interest, 5th Ed. Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md. (1991)).

[000111] Accordingly, in one embodiment, the invention provides a modified IgG comprising:
30 a feline IgG constant domain comprising at least one amino acid substitution relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said substitution is at amino acid residue 428, numbered according to the EU index as in Kabat. The serine at position 428 can be substituted with any other amino acid. For example, the serine at position 428 can be substituted with

leucine (i.e., S428L), asparagine (i.e., S428N), alanine (i.e., S428A), phenylalanine (i.e., S428F), glycine (i.e., S428G), isoleucine (i.e., S428I), lysine (i.e., S428K), histidine (i.e., S428H), methionine (i.e., S428M), glutamine (i.e., S428Q), arginine (i.e., S428R), threonine (i.e., S428T), valine (i.e., S428V), tryptophan (i.e., S428W), tyrosine (i.e., S428Y), cysteine (i.e., S428C), aspartic acid (i.e., S428D), glutamic acid (i.e., S428E), or proline (i.e., S428P).
5 In a particular embodiment, the substitution is a substitution with leucine (i.e., S428L).

[000112] In a particular example, the mutant constant domain of the invention comprises the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO.: 1. In some embodiments, the mutant IgG constant domain is a homologue, a variant, an isomer, or a functional fragment of SEQ ID NO.:
10 1, but with mutation at position 428. Each possibility represents a separate embodiment of the present invention.

[000113] The amino acid sequence of the mutant constant domain set forth in SEQ ID NO.: 1 is encoded by its corresponding mutant nucleic acid sequence, for example, a mutant form of the nucleic acid sequence set forth in in SEQ ID NO.: 4.

15 [000114] In another embodiment, the invention provides a modified IgG comprising: a feline IgG constant domain comprising at least one amino acid substitution relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said substitution is at amino acid residue 434, numbered according to the EU index as in Kabat. The serine at position 434 can be substituted with any other amino acid. For example, the serine at position 434 can be substituted with histidine (i.e.,
20 S434H), asparagine (i.e., S434N), alanine (i.e., S434A), phenylalanine (i.e., S434F), glycine (i.e., S434G), isoleucine (i.e., S434I), lysine (i.e., S434K), leucine (i.e., S434L), methionine (i.e., S434M), glutamine (i.e., S434Q), arginine (i.e., S434R), threonine (i.e., S434T), valine (i.e., S434V), tryptophan (i.e., S434W), tyrosine (i.e., S434Y), cysteine (i.e., S434C), aspartic acid (i.e., S434D), glutamic acid (i.e., S434E), or proline (i.e., S434P). In a particular
25 embodiment, the substitution is a substitution with histidine (i.e., S434H).

[000115] In a particular example, the mutant constant domain of the invention comprises the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO.: 2. In some embodiments, the mutant IgG constant domain is a homologue, a variant, an isomer, or a functional fragment of SEQ ID NO.:
30 2, but with mutation at position 434. Each possibility represents a separate embodiment of the present invention.

[000116] The amino acid sequence of the mutant constant domain set forth in SEQ ID NO.: 2 is encoded by its corresponding mutant nucleic acid sequence, for example, a mutant form of the nucleic acid sequence set forth in in SEQ ID NO.: 4.

5 [000117] In some embodiments, the feline IgG constant domain comprises substitutions of serines at both 428 and 434 positions with leucine and histidine, respectively.

[000118] The modified IgG of the invention provides the half-life for a period ranging from about 8 days to about 26 days. In one embodiment, the modified IgG of the invention provides the half-life for about 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 23, or 26 days. In a particular embodiment, the modified IgG of the invention provides the half-life for more than 10 days.

10 Methods for Making Antibody Molecules of the Invention

[000119] Methods for making antibody molecules are well known in the art and fully described in U.S. Patents 8,394,925; 8,088,376; 8,546,543; 10,336,818; and 9,803,023 and U.S. Patent Application Publication 20060067930, which are incorporated by reference herein in their entirety. Any suitable method, process, or technique, known to one of skilled in the art, can be
15 used. An antibody molecule having a variant Fc region of the invention may be generated according to the methods well known in the art. In some embodiments, the variant Fc region can be fused to a heterologous polypeptide of choice, such as an antibody variable domain or binding domain of a receptor or ligand.

[000120] With the advent of methods of molecular biology and recombinant technology, a
20 person of skilled in the art can produce antibody and antibody-like molecules by recombinant means and thereby generate gene sequences that code for specific amino acid sequences found in the polypeptide structure of the antibodies. Such antibodies can be produced by either cloning the gene sequences encoding the polypeptide chains of said antibodies or by direct synthesis of said polypeptide chains, with assembly of the synthesized chains to form active
25 tetrameric (H2L2) structures with affinity for specific epitopes and antigenic determinants. This has permitted the ready production of antibodies having sequences characteristic of neutralizing antibodies from different species and sources.

[000121] Regardless of the source of the antibodies, or how they are recombinantly constructed, or how they are synthesized, in vitro or in vivo, using transgenic animals, large cell cultures of
30 laboratory or commercial size, using transgenic plants, or by direct chemical synthesis employing no living organisms at any stage of the process, all antibodies have a similar overall

3 dimensional structure. This structure is often given as H2L2 and refers to the fact that antibodies commonly comprise two light (L) amino acid chains and 2 heavy (H) amino acid chains. Both chains have regions capable of interacting with a structurally complementary antigenic target. The regions interacting with the target are referred to as "variable" or "V" regions and are characterized by differences in amino acid sequence from antibodies of different antigenic specificity. The variable regions of either H or L chains contain the amino acid sequences capable of specifically binding to antigenic targets.

[000122] As used herein, the term "antigen binding region" refers to that portion of an antibody molecule which contains the amino acid residues that interact with an antigen and confer on the antibody its specificity and affinity for the antigen. The antibody binding region includes the "framework" amino acid residues necessary to maintain the proper conformation of the antigen-binding residues. Within the variable regions of the H or L chains that provide for the antigen binding regions are smaller sequences dubbed "hypervariable" because of their extreme variability between antibodies of differing specificity. Such hypervariable regions are also referred to as "complementarity determining regions" or "CDR" regions. These CDR regions account for the basic specificity of the antibody for a particular antigenic determinant structure.

[000123] The CDRs represent non-contiguous stretches of amino acids within the variable regions but, regardless of species, the positional locations of these critical amino acid sequences within the variable heavy and light chain regions have been found to have similar locations within the amino acid sequences of the variable chains. The variable heavy and light chains of all antibodies each have three CDR regions, each non-contiguous with the others. In all mammalian species, antibody peptides contain constant (i.e., highly conserved) and variable regions, and, within the latter, there are the CDRs and the so-called "framework regions" made up of amino acid sequences within the variable region of the heavy or light chain but outside the CDRs.

[000124] The present invention further provides a vector including at least one of the nucleic acids described above. Because the genetic code is degenerate, more than one codon can be used to encode a particular amino acid. Using the genetic code, one or more different nucleotide sequences can be identified, each of which would be capable of encoding the amino acid. The probability that a particular oligonucleotide will, in fact, constitute the actual encoding sequence can be estimated by considering abnormal base pairing relationships and the frequency with which a particular codon is actually used (to encode a particular amino acid) in eukaryotic or prokaryotic cells expressing an antibody or portion. Such "codon usage rules"

are disclosed by Lathe, et al., 183 *J. Molec. Biol.* 1-12 (1985). Using the "codon usage rules" of Lathe, a single nucleotide sequence, or a set of nucleotide sequences that contains a theoretical "most probable" nucleotide sequence capable of encoding feline IgG sequences can be identified. It is also intended that the antibody coding regions for use in the present invention could also be provided by altering existing antibody genes using standard molecular biological techniques that result in variants of the antibodies and peptides described herein. Such variants include, but are not limited to deletions, additions and substitutions in the amino acid sequence of the antibodies or peptides.

[000125] For example, one class of substitutions is conservative amino acid substitutions. Such substitutions are those that substitute a given amino acid in a feline antibody peptide by another amino acid of like characteristics. Typically seen as conservative substitutions are the replacements, one for another, among the aliphatic amino acids Ala, Val, Leu, and Ile; interchange of the hydroxyl residues Ser and Thr, exchange of the acidic residues Asp and Glu, substitution between the amide residues Asn and Gln, exchange of the basic residues Lys and Arg, replacements among the aromatic residues Phe, Tyr, and the like. Guidance concerning which amino acid changes are likely to be phenotypically silent is found in Bowie *et al.*, 247 *Science* 1306-10 (1990).

[000126] Variant feline antibodies or peptides may be fully functional or may lack function in one or more activities. Fully functional variants typically contain only conservative variations or variations in non-critical residues or in non-critical regions. Functional variants can also contain substitution of similar amino acids that result in no change or an insignificant change in function. Alternatively, such substitutions may positively or negatively affect function to some degree. Non-functional variants typically contain one or more non-conservative amino acid substitutions, deletions, insertions, inversions, or truncation or a substitution, insertion, inversion, or deletion in a critical residue or critical region.

[000127] Amino acids that are essential for function can be identified by methods known in the art, such as site-directed mutagenesis or alanine-scanning mutagenesis. Cunningham *et al.*, 244 *Science* 1081-85 (1989). The latter procedure introduces single alanine mutations at every residue in the molecule. The resulting mutant molecules are then tested for biological activity such as epitope binding or in vitro ADCC activity. Sites that are critical for ligand-receptor binding can also be determined by structural analysis such as crystallography, nuclear magnetic resonance, or photoaffinity labeling. Smith *et al.*, 224 *J. Mol. Biol.* 899-904 (1992); de Vos *et al.*, 255 *Science* 306-12 (1992).

[000128] Moreover, polypeptides often contain amino acids other than the twenty "naturally occurring" amino acids. Further, many amino acids, including the terminal amino acids, may be modified by natural processes, such as processing and other post-translational modifications, or by chemical modification techniques well known in the art. Known modifications include, but are not limited to, acetylation, acylation, ADP-ribosylation, amidation, covalent attachment of flavin, covalent attachment of a heme moiety, covalent attachment of a nucleotide or nucleotide derivative, covalent attachment of a lipid or lipid derivative, covalent attachment of phosphatidylinositol, cross-linking, cyclization, disulfide bond formation, demethylation, formation of covalent crosslinks, formation of cystine, formation of pyroglutamate, formylation, gamma carboxylation, glycosylation, GPI anchor formation, hydroxylation, iodination, methylation, myristoylation, oxidation, proteolytic processing, phosphorylation, prenylation, racemization, selenoylation, sulfation, transfer-RNA mediated addition of amino acids to proteins such as arginylation, and ubiquitination. Such modifications are well known to those of skill in the art and have been described in great detail in the scientific literature. Several particularly common modifications, glycosylation, lipid attachment, sulfation, gamma-carboxylation of glutamic acid residues, hydroxylation and ADP ribosylation, for instance, are described in most basic texts, such as *Proteins-Structure and Molecular Properties* (2nd ed., T. E. Creighton, W. H. Freeman & Co., N.Y., 1993). Many detailed reviews are available on this subject, such as by Wold, *Posttranslational Covalent Modification of proteins*, 1-12 (Johnson, ed., Academic Press, N.Y., 1983); Seifter *et al.* 182 *Meth. Enzymol.* 626-46 (1990); and Rattan *et al.* 663 *Ann. NY Acad. Sci.* 48-62 (1992).

[000129] In another aspect, the invention provides antibody derivatives. A "derivative" of an antibody contains additional chemical moieties not normally a part of the protein. Covalent modifications of the protein are included within the scope of this invention. Such modifications may be introduced into the molecule by reacting targeted amino acid residues of the antibody with an organic derivatizing agent that is capable of reacting with selected side chains or terminal residues. For example, derivatization with bifunctional agents, well-known in the art, is useful for cross-linking the antibody or fragment to a water-insoluble support matrix or to other macromolecular carriers.

[000130] Derivatives also include radioactively labeled monoclonal antibodies that are labeled. For example, with radioactive iodine (251,131I), carbon (14C), sulfur (35S), indium, tritium (H³) or the like; conjugates of monoclonal antibodies with biotin or avidin, with enzymes, such as horseradish peroxidase, alkaline phosphatase, beta-D-galactosidase, glucose oxidase,

glucoamylase, carboxylic acid anhydrase, acetylcholine esterase, lysozyme, malate dehydrogenase or glucose 6-phosphate dehydrogenase; and also conjugates of monoclonal antibodies with bioluminescent agents (such as luciferase), chemoluminescent agents (such as acridine esters) or fluorescent agents (such as phycobiliproteins).

5 [000131] Another derivative bifunctional antibody of the invention is a bispecific antibody, generated by combining parts of two separate antibodies that recognize two different antigenic groups. This may be achieved by crosslinking or recombinant techniques. Additionally, moieties may be added to the antibody or a portion thereof to increase half-life in vivo (e.g., by lengthening the time to clearance from the blood stream. Such techniques include, for
10 example, adding PEG moieties (also termed pegylation), and are well-known in the art. See U.S. Patent. Appl. Pub. No. 20030031671.

[000132] In some embodiments, the nucleic acids encoding a subject antibody are introduced directly into a host cell, and the cell is incubated under conditions sufficient to induce expression of the encoded antibody. After the subject nucleic acids have been introduced into
15 a cell, the cell is typically incubated, normally at 37° C., sometimes under selection, for a period of about 1-24 hours in order to allow for the expression of the antibody. In one embodiment, the antibody is secreted into the supernatant of the media in which the cell is growing. Traditionally, monoclonal antibodies have been produced as native molecules in murine hybridoma lines. In addition to that technology, the present invention provides for recombinant
20 DNA expression of the antibodies. This allows the production of antibodies, as well as a spectrum of antibody derivatives and fusion proteins in a host species of choice.

[000133] A nucleic acid sequence encoding at least one antibody, portion or polypeptide of the invention may be recombined with vector DNA in accordance with conventional techniques, including blunt-ended or staggered-ended termini for ligation, restriction enzyme digestion to
25 provide appropriate termini, filling in of cohesive ends as appropriate, alkaline phosphatase treatment to avoid undesirable joining, and ligation with appropriate ligases. Techniques for such manipulations are disclosed, e.g., by Maniatis et al., MOLECULAR CLONING, LAB. MANUAL, (Cold Spring Harbor Lab. Press, NY, 1982 and 1989), and Ausubel et al. 1993 supra, may be used to construct nucleic acid sequences which encode an antibody molecule or
30 antigen binding region thereof.

[000134] A nucleic acid molecule, such as DNA, is said to be "capable of expressing" a polypeptide if it contains nucleotide sequences which contain transcriptional and translational

regulatory information and such sequences are "operably linked" to nucleotide sequences which encode the polypeptide. An operable linkage is a linkage in which the regulatory DNA sequences and the DNA sequence sought to be expressed are connected in such a way as to permit gene expression as peptides or antibody portions in recoverable amounts. The precise
5 nature of the regulatory regions needed for gene expression may vary from organism to organism, as is well known in the analogous art. See, e.g., Sambrook *et al.*, 2001 *supra*; Ausubel *et al.*, 1993 *supra*.

[000135] The present invention accordingly encompasses the expression of an antibody or peptide, in either prokaryotic or eukaryotic cells. Suitable hosts include bacterial or eukaryotic
10 hosts including bacteria, yeast, insects, fungi, bird and mammalian cells either in vivo, or in situ, or host cells of mammalian, insect, bird or yeast origin. The mammalian cell or tissue may be of human, primate, hamster, rabbit, rodent, cow, pig, sheep, horse, goat, dog or cat origin. Any other suitable mammalian cell, known in the art, may also be used.

[000136] In one embodiment, the nucleotide sequence of the invention will be incorporated
15 into a plasmid or viral vector capable of autonomous replication in the recipient host. Any of a wide variety of vectors may be employed for this purpose. See, e.g., Ausubel *et al.*, 1993 *supra*. Factors of importance in selecting a particular plasmid or viral vector include: the ease with which recipient cells that contain the vector may be recognized and selected from those recipient cells which do not contain the vector; the number of copies of the vector which are
20 desired in a particular host; and whether it is desirable to be able to "shuttle" the vector between host cells of different species.

[000137] Example prokaryotic vectors known in the art include plasmids such as those capable of replication in *E. coli* (such as, for example, pBR322, ColE1, pSC101, pACYC 184, .pi.vX). Such plasmids are, for example, disclosed by Maniatis *et al.*, 1989 *supra*; Ausubel *et al.*, 1993
25 *supra*. Bacillus plasmids include pC194, pC221, pT127, etc. Such plasmids are disclosed by Gryczan, in THE MOLEC. BIO. OF THE BACILLI 307-329 (Academic Press, NY, 1982). Suitable Streptomyces plasmids include p1J101 (Kendall *et al.*, 169 J. Bacteriol. 4177-83 (1987), and Streptomyces bacteriophages such as phLC31 (Chater *et al.*, in SIXTH INT'L SYMPOSIUM ON ACTINOMYCETALES BIO. 45-54 (Akademiai Kiado, Budapest,
30 Hungary 1986). Pseudomonas plasmids are reviewed in John *et al.*, 8 Rev. Infect. Dis. 693-704 (1986); Izaki, 33 Jpn. J. Bacteriol. 729-42 (1978); and Ausubel *et al.*, 1993 *supra*.

[000138] Alternatively, gene expression elements useful for the expression of cDNA encoding antibodies or peptides include, but are not limited to, (a) viral transcription promoters and their enhancer elements, such as the SV40 early promoter (Okayama et al., 3 Mol. Cell. Biol. 280 (1983), Rous sarcoma virus LTR (Gorman et al., 79 Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci., USA 6777 (1982),
5 and Moloney murine leukemia virus LTR (Grosschedl et al., 41 Cell 885 (1985); (b) splice regions and polyadenylation sites such as those derived from the SV40 late region (Okayama et al., 1983), and (c) polyadenylation sites such as in SV40 (Okayama et al., 1983).

[000139] Immunoglobulin cDNA genes can be expressed as described by Weidle *et al.*, 51 Gene 21 (1987), using as expression elements the SV40 early promoter and its enhancer, the
10 mouse immunoglobulin H chain promoter enhancers, SV40 late region mRNA splicing, rabbit S-globin intervening sequence, immunoglobulin and rabbit S-globin polyadenylation sites, and SV40 polyadenylation elements. For immunoglobulin genes comprised of part cDNA, part genomic DNA (Whittle et al., 1 Protein Engin. 499 (1987)), the transcriptional promoter can be human cytomegalovirus, the promoter enhancers can be cytomegalovirus and mouse/human
15 immunoglobulin, and mRNA splicing and polyadenylation regions can be the native chromosomal immunoglobulin sequences.

[000140] In one embodiment, for expression of cDNA genes in rodent cells, the transcriptional promoter is a viral LTR sequence, the transcriptional promoter enhancers are either or both the mouse immunoglobulin heavy chain enhancer and the viral LTR enhancer, the splice region
20 contains an intron of greater than 31 bp, and the polyadenylation and transcription termination regions are derived from the native chromosomal sequence corresponding to the immunoglobulin chain being synthesized. In other embodiments, cDNA sequences encoding other proteins are combined with the above-recited expression elements to achieve expression of the proteins in mammalian cells.

[000141] Each fused gene can be assembled in, or inserted into, an expression vector. Recipient cells capable of expressing the immunoglobulin chain gene product are then transfected singly with a peptide or H or L chain-encoding gene, or are co-transfected with H and L chain gene. The transfected recipient cells are cultured under conditions that permit expression of the incorporated genes and the expressed immunoglobulin chains or intact antibodies or fragments
30 are recovered from the culture.

[000142] In one embodiment, the fused genes encoding the peptide or H and L chains, or portions thereof are assembled in separate expression vectors that are then used to cotransfect

a recipient cell. Alternatively the fused genes encoding the H and L chains can be assembled on the same expression vector. For transfection of the expression vectors and production of the antibody, the recipient cell line may be a myeloma cell. Myeloma cells can synthesize, assemble and secrete immunoglobulins encoded by transfected immunoglobulin genes and possess the mechanism for glycosylation of the immunoglobulin. Myeloma cells can be grown in culture or in the peritoneal cavity of a mouse, where secreted immunoglobulin can be obtained from ascites fluid. Other suitable recipient cells include lymphoid cells such as B lymphocytes of feline or non-feline origin, hybridoma cells of feline or non-feline origin, or interspecies heterohybridoma cells.

10 [000143] The expression vector carrying an antibody construct or polypeptide of the invention can be introduced into an appropriate host cell by any of a variety of suitable means, including such biochemical means as transformation, transfection, conjugation, protoplast fusion, calcium phosphate-precipitation, and application with polycations such as diethylaminoethyl (DEAE) dextran, and such mechanical means as electroporation, direct microinjection, and
15 microprojectile bombardment. Johnston *et al.*, 240 *Science* 1538 (1988).

[000144] Yeast may provide substantial advantages over bacteria for the production of immunoglobulin H and L chains. Yeasts carry out post-translational peptide modifications including glycosylation. A number of recombinant DNA strategies now exist which utilize strong promoter sequences and high copy number plasmids which can be used for production
20 of the desired proteins in yeast. Yeast recognizes leader sequences of cloned mammalian gene products and secretes peptides bearing leader sequences (i.e., pre-peptides). Hitzman *et al.*, 11th Int'l Conference on Yeast, Genetics & Molec. Biol. (Montpelier, France, 1982).

[000145] Yeast gene expression systems can be routinely evaluated for the levels of production, secretion and the stability of peptides, antibodies, fragments and regions thereof. Any of a series of yeast gene expression systems incorporating promoter and termination elements from
25 the actively expressed genes coding for glycolytic enzymes produced in large quantities when yeasts are grown in media rich in glucose can be utilized. Known glycolytic genes can also provide very efficient transcription control signals. For example, the promoter and terminator signals of the phosphoglycerate kinase (PGK) gene can be utilized. A number of approaches
30 can be taken for evaluating optimal expression plasmids for the expression of cloned immunoglobulin cDNAs in yeast. See Vol. II DNA Cloning, 45-66, (Glover, ed.,) IRL Press, Oxford, UK 1985).

[000146] Bacterial strains can also be utilized as hosts for the production of antibody molecules or peptides described by this invention. Plasmid vectors containing replicon and control sequences which are derived from species compatible with a host cell are used in connection with these bacterial hosts. The vector carries a replication site, as well as specific genes which are capable of providing phenotypic selection in transformed cells. A number of approaches can be taken for evaluating the expression plasmids for the production of antibodies, fragments and regions or antibody chains encoded by the cloned immunoglobulin cDNAs in bacteria (see Glover, 1985 supra; Ausubel, 1993 supra; Sambrook, 2001 supra; Colligan et al., eds. Current Protocols in Immunology, John Wiley & Sons, NY, N.Y. (1994-2001); Colligan et al., eds. Current Protocols in Protein Science, John Wiley & Sons, NY, N.Y. (1997-2001)).

[000147] Host mammalian cells may be grown in vitro or in vivo. Mammalian cells provide posttranslational modifications to immunoglobulin protein molecules including leader peptide removal, folding and assembly of Heavy and Light chains, glycosylation of the antibody molecules, and secretion of functional antibody protein. Mammalian cells which can be useful as hosts for the production of antibody proteins, in addition to the cells of lymphoid origin described above, include cells of fibroblast origin, such as Vero (ATCC CRL 81) or CHO-K1 (ATCC CRL 61) cells. Many vector systems are available for the expression of cloned Heavy and Light chain genes in mammalian cells (see Glover, 1985 supra). Different approaches can be followed to obtain complete H2L2 antibodies. It is possible to co-express Heavy and Light chains in the same cells to achieve intracellular association and linkage of Heavy and Light chains into complete tetrameric H2L2 antibodies and/or peptides. The co-expression can occur by using either the same or different plasmids in the same host. Genes for both Heavy and Light chains and/or peptides can be placed into the same plasmid, which is then transfected into cells, thereby selecting directly for cells that express both chains. Alternatively, cells can be transfected first with a plasmid encoding one chain, for example the Light chain, followed by transfection of the resulting cell line with an Heavy chain plasmid containing a second selectable marker. Cell lines producing peptides and/or H2L2 molecules via either route could be transfected with plasmids encoding additional copies of peptides, Heavy, Light, or Heavy plus Light chains in conjunction with additional selectable markers to generate cell lines with enhanced properties, such as higher production of assembled H2L2 antibody molecules or enhanced stability of the transfected cell lines.

[000148] For long-term, high-yield production of recombinant antibodies, stable expression may be used. For example, cell lines, which stably express the antibody molecule may be engineered. Rather than using expression vectors which contain viral origins of replication,

host cells can be transformed with immunoglobulin expression cassettes and a selectable marker. Following the introduction of the foreign DNA, engineered cells may be allowed to grow for 1-2 days in enriched media, and then are switched to a selective media. The selectable marker in the recombinant plasmid confers resistance to the selection and allows cells to stably
5 integrate the plasmid into a chromosome and grow to form foci which in turn can be cloned and expanded into cell lines. Such engineered cell lines may be particularly useful in screening and evaluation of compounds/components that interact directly or indirectly with the antibody molecule.

[000149] Once an antibody of the invention has been produced, it may be purified by any
10 method known in the art for purification of an immunoglobulin molecule, for example, by chromatography (e.g., ion exchange, affinity, particularly affinity for the specific antigen after Protein A, and sizing column chromatography), centrifugation, differential solubility, or by any other standard technique for the purification of proteins. In many embodiments, antibodies are secreted from the cell into culture medium and harvested from the culture medium.

15 [000150] In another aspect, the invention provides an antibody comprising: a feline IgG constant domain comprising at least one amino acid substitution relative to a wild-type feline IgG constant domain, wherein said substitution is at amino acid residue 428, 434, or a combination thereof. In one embodiment, the substitution is a substitution of serine at position 428 with leucine (S428L). In another embodiment, the substitution is a substitution of serine
20 at position 434 with histidine (S434H).

[000151] The antibody having the substitution can be any suitable antibody known to one of skilled in the art. In one example, the antibody is an anti-IL31 antibody. In another example, the antibody is an anti-NGF antibody.

[000152] Anti-IL31 antibody, without the substitution described herein, is well known in the
25 art and fully described in, for example, U.S. Patents 10,526,405; 10,421,807; 9,206,253; and 8,790,651. Also, anti-NGF antibody, without the substitution described herein, is also well known in the art and fully described in, for example, U.S. Patents 10,125,192; 10,093,725; 9,951,128; 9,617,334; and 9,505,829.

[000153] In one embodiment, the anti-IL31 antibody of the invention (i.e., antibody having the
30 substitution) reduces, inhibits, or neutralizes an IL-31-mediated pruritic or allergic condition. In another embodiment, the anti-IL31 antibody of the invention reduces, inhibits, or neutralizes IL-31 activity in a cat.

[000154] VL, VH, and CDR sequences of the anti-IL31 antibodies are well known in the art and fully described in, for example, U.S. Patents 10,526,405; 10,421,807; 9,206,253; and 8,790,651. In one example, the anti-IL31 antibody of the invention may include at least one of the following complementary determining region (CDR) sequences: variable heavy (VH)-
5 CDR1 of SEQ ID NO: 15, VH-CDR2 of SEQ ID NO: 16, VH-CDR3 of SEQ ID NO: 17, variable light (VL)-CDR1 of SEQ ID NO: 20, VL-CDR2 of SEQ ID NO: 21, and VL-CDR3 of SEQ ID NO: 22. In some embodiments, the anti-IL31 antibody of the invention may include at least one CDR described herein.

[000155] In one embodiment, the anti-IL31 antibody of the invention may include a variable
10 light chain comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 19. In another embodiment, the anti-IL31 antibody of the invention may include a variable heavy chain comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 14.

[000156] In one embodiment, the mutant anti-NGF antibody of the invention (i.e., antibody having the substitution) reduces, inhibits, or neutralizes NGF activity in an animal, and/or
15 enhanced ability to inhibit NGF binding to Trk A and p75, in order to treat an NGF-mediated pain or condition.

[000157] VL, VH, and CDR sequences of the anti-NGF antibodies are also well known in the art and fully described in, for example, U.S. Patents 10,125,192; 10,093,725; 9,951,128; 9,617,334; and 9,505,829. In one example, the anti-NGF antibody of the invention may include
20 at least one of the following complementary determining region (CDR) sequences: variable heavy (VH)-CDR1 of SEQ ID NO: 24, VH-CDR2 of SEQ ID NO: 25, VH-CDR3 of SEQ ID NO: 26, variable light (VL)-CDR1 of SEQ ID NO: 28, VL-CDR2 of SEQ ID NO: 29, and VL-CDR3 of SEQ ID NO: 30.

[000158] In another example, the anti-NGF antibody of the invention may include at least one
25 of the following complementary determining region (CDR) sequences: variable heavy (VH)-CDR1 of SEQ ID NO: 32, VH-CDR2 of SEQ ID NO: 33, VH-CDR3 of SEQ ID NO: 34, variable light (VL)-CDR1 of SEQ ID NO: 36, VL-CDR2 of SEQ ID NO: 37, and VL-CDR3 of SEQ ID NO: 38.

[000159] In one embodiment, the anti-NGF antibody of the invention may include a variable
30 light chain comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 27 or 35.

[000160] In another embodiment, the anti-NGF antibody of the invention may include a variable heavy chain comprising a variable sequence of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 23 or 31.

Pharmaceutical and Veterinary Applications

5 [000161] The invention also provides a pharmaceutical composition comprising molecules of the invention and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers. More specifically, the invention provides for a pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent and, as active ingredient, an antibody or peptide according to the invention.

10 [000162] "Pharmaceutically acceptable carriers" include any excipient which is nontoxic to the cell or animal being exposed thereto at the dosages and concentrations employed. The pharmaceutical composition may include one or additional therapeutic agents.

[000163] "Pharmaceutically acceptable" refers to those compounds, materials, compositions, and/or dosage forms which are, within the scope of sound medical judgment, suitable for
15 contact with the tissues of animals without excessive toxicity, irritation, allergic response, or other problem complications commensurate with a reasonable benefit/risk ratio.

[000164] Pharmaceutically acceptable carriers include solvents, dispersion media, buffers, coatings, antibacterial and antifungal agents, wetting agents, preservatives, buffers, chelating agents, antioxidants, isotonic agents and absorption delaying agents.

20 [000165] Pharmaceutically acceptable carriers include water; saline; phosphate buffered saline; dextrose; glycerol; alcohols such as ethanol and isopropanol; phosphate, citrate and other organic acids; ascorbic acid; low molecular weight (less than about 10 residues) polypeptides; proteins, such as serum albumin, gelatin, or immunoglobulins; hydrophilic polymers such as polyvinylpyrrolidone; amino acids such as glycine, glutamine, asparagine, arginine or lysine;
25 monosaccharides, disaccharides, and other carbohydrates including glucose, mannose, or dextrans; EDTA; salt forming counterions such as sodium; and/or nonionic surfactants such as TWEEN, polyethylene glycol (PEG), and PLURONICS; isotonic agents such as sugars, polyalcohols such as mannitol and sorbitol, and sodium chloride; as well as combinations thereof.

30 [000166] The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention may be formulated in a variety of ways, including for example, liquid, semi-solid, or solid dosage forms, such as liquid solutions

(e.g., injectable and infusible solutions), dispersions or suspensions, liposomes, suppositories, tablets, pills, or powders. In some embodiments, the compositions are in the form of injectable or infusible solutions. The composition can be in a form suitable for intravenous, intraarterial, intramuscular, subcutaneous, parenteral, transmucosal, oral, topical, or transdermal administration. The composition may be formulated as an immediate, controlled, extended or delayed release composition.

[000167] The compositions of the invention can be administered either as individual therapeutic agents or in combination with other therapeutic agents. They can be administered alone, but are generally administered with a pharmaceutical carrier selected on the basis of the chosen route of administration and standard pharmaceutical practice. Administration of the antibodies disclosed herein may be carried out by any suitable means, including parenteral injection (such as intraperitoneal, subcutaneous, or intramuscular injection), orally, or by topical administration of the antibodies (typically carried in a pharmaceutical formulation) to an airway surface. Topical administration to an airway surface can be carried out by intranasal administration (e.g., by use of dropper, swab, or inhaler). Topical administration of the antibodies to an airway surface can also be carried out by inhalation administration, such as by creating respirable particles of a pharmaceutical formulation (including both solid and liquid particles) containing the antibodies as an aerosol suspension, and then causing the subject to inhale the respirable particles. Methods and apparatus for administering respirable particles of pharmaceutical formulations are well known, and any conventional technique can be employed.

[000168] In some desired embodiments, the antibodies are administered by parenteral injection. For parenteral administration, antibodies or molecules can be formulated as a solution, suspension, emulsion or lyophilized powder in association with a pharmaceutically acceptable parenteral vehicle. For example, the vehicle may be a solution of the antibody or a cocktail thereof dissolved in an acceptable carrier, such as an aqueous carrier such vehicles are water, saline, Ringer's solution, dextrose solution, trehalose or sucrose solution, or 5% serum albumin, 0.4% saline, 0.3% glycine and the like. Liposomes and nonaqueous vehicles such as fixed oils can also be used. These solutions are sterile and generally free of particulate matter. These compositions may be sterilized by conventional, well known sterilization techniques. The compositions may contain pharmaceutically acceptable auxiliary substances as required to approximate physiological conditions such as pH adjusting and buffering agents, toxicity adjustment agents and the like, for example sodium acetate, sodium chloride, potassium

chloride, calcium chloride, sodium lactate, etc. The concentration of antibody in these formulations can vary widely, for example from less than about 0.5%, usually at or at least about 1% to as much as 15% or 20% by weight and will be selected primarily based on fluid volumes, viscosities, etc., in accordance with the particular mode of administration selected.

- 5 The vehicle or lyophilized powder can contain additives that maintain isotonicity (e.g., sodium chloride, mannitol) and chemical stability (e.g., buffers and preservatives). The formulation is sterilized by commonly used techniques. Actual methods for preparing parenterally administrable compositions will be known or apparent to those skilled in the art and are described in more detail in, for example, REMINGTON'S PHARMA. SCI. (15th ed., Mack
10 Pub. Co., Easton, Pa., 1980).

- [000169] The antibodies or molecules of the invention can be lyophilized for storage and reconstituted in a suitable carrier prior to use. This technique has been shown to be effective with conventional immune globulins. Any suitable lyophilization and reconstitution techniques can be employed. It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that lyophilization and
15 reconstitution can lead to varying degrees of antibody activity loss and that use levels may have to be adjusted to compensate. The compositions containing the present antibodies or a cocktail thereof can be administered for prevention of recurrence and/or therapeutic treatments for existing disease. Suitable pharmaceutical carriers are described in the most recent edition of REMINGTON'S PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES, a standard reference text in this field of
20 art. In therapeutic application, compositions are administered to a subject already suffering from a disease, in an amount sufficient to cure or at least partially arrest or alleviate the disease and its complications.

- [000170] Effective doses of the compositions of the present invention, for treatment of conditions or diseases as described herein vary depending upon many different factors,
25 including, for example, but not limited to, the pharmacodynamic characteristics of the particular agent, and its mode and route of administration; target site; physiological state of the animal; other medications administered; whether treatment is prophylactic or therapeutic; age, health, and weight of the recipient; nature and extent of symptoms kind of concurrent treatment, frequency of treatment, and the effect desired.

- 30 [000171] Single or multiple administrations of the compositions can be carried out with dose levels and pattern being selected by the treating veterinarian. In any event, the pharmaceutical formulations should provide a quantity of the antibody(ies) of this invention sufficient to effectively treat the subject. In some embodiments, the composition is administered bimonthly,

once-in-three months, once-in-four months, once-in-five months, once-in-six months, or once-in-seven months.

[000172] Treatment dosages may be titrated using routine methods known to those of skill in the art to optimize safety and efficacy.

5 [000173] The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention may include a “therapeutically effective amount.” A “therapeutically effective amount” refers to an amount effective, at dosages and for periods of time necessary, to achieve the desired therapeutic result. A therapeutically effective amount of a molecule may vary according to factors such as the disease state, age, sex, and weight of the individual, and the ability of the molecule to elicit a
10 desired response in the individual. A therapeutically effective amount is also one in which any toxic or detrimental effects of the molecule are outweighed by the therapeutically beneficial effects.

[000174] In another aspect, the compositions of the invention can be used, for example, in the treatment of various diseases and disorders in cats. As used herein, the terms “treat” and
15 “treatment” refer to therapeutic treatment, including prophylactic or preventative measures, wherein the object is to prevent or slow down (lessen) an undesired physiological change associated with a disease or condition. Beneficial or desired clinical results include, but are not limited to, alleviation of symptoms, diminishment of the extent of a disease or condition, stabilization of a disease or condition (i.e., where the disease or condition does not worsen),
20 delay or slowing of the progression of a disease or condition, amelioration or palliation of the disease or condition, and remission (whether partial or total) of the disease or condition, whether detectable or undetectable. Those in need of treatment include those already with the disease or condition as well as those prone to having the disease or condition or those in which the disease or condition is to be prevented.

25 [000175] The composition having mutant molecule of the invention can be used to treat any suitable disease or disorder. For example, the mutant anti-IL31 antibody of the invention can be used to treat an IL-31-mediated pruritic or allergic condition. The examples of IL-31-mediated pruritic condition include, for example, but not limited to, atopic dermatitis, eczema, psoriasis, scleroderma, and pruritis. The examples of IL-31-mediated allergic condition
30 include, for example, but not limited to, allergic dermatitis, summer eczema, urticaria, heaves, inflammatory airway disease, recurrent airway obstruction, airway hyper-responsiveness,

chronic obstruction pulmonary disease, and inflammatory processes resulting from autoimmunity.

[000176] The mutant anti-NGF antibody of the invention can be used to treat an NGF-mediated pain or a condition. The examples of a pain include, for example, but not limited to, a chronic
5 pain, an inflammatory pain, a post-operative incision pain, a neuropathic pain, a fracture pain, an osteoporotic fracture pain, a post-herpetic neuralgia, a cancer pain, a pain resulting from burns, a pain associated with wounds, a pain associated with trauma, a neuropathic pain, a pain associated with a musculoskeletal disorder, a rheumatoid arthritis, an osteoarthritis, an ankylosing spondylitis, a seronegative (non-rheumatoid) an arthropathies, a non-articular
10 rheumatism, a periarticular disorder, or a peripheral neuropathy. In a particular embodiment, the pain is an osteoarthritis pain.

[000177] All patents and literature references cited in the present specification are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

[000178] The following examples are provided to supplement the prior disclosure and to
15 provide a better understanding of the subject matter described herein. These examples should not be considered to limit the described subject matter. It is understood that the examples and embodiments described herein are for illustrative purposes only and that various modifications or changes in light thereof will be apparent to persons skilled in the art and are to be included within, and can be made without departing from, the true scope of the invention.

EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1

Construction of feline IgG Fc mutants

[000179] Construction of all feline IgGs (**Fig. 1**) was carried out as described by Strietzel *et al.* (Strietzel *et al.*, 2014, *Vet Immunol Immunopathol.*, vol. 158(3-4), pages 214-223), in which plasmids containing sequence encoding for feline constant regions for the IgG sub-class 1 Allele a (IgG1a) were utilized and VH/VL sequences for each mAb investigated herein were inserted upstream and in frame with the nucleotides encoding for the constant domains. Mutations were incorporated into position S434 and S428 of the CH3 domain (**Fig. 2**) of each plasmid using Agilent's QuikChange II Mutagenesis and associated Agilent primer design tools for single-site directed mutagenesis (<https://www.agilent.com/store/primerDesignProgram.jsp>).

[000180] Antibody constructs were transiently expressed either in HEK 293 cells using a standard lipofectamine transfection protocol (Invitrogen Life Technologies, Carlsbad, CA, USA) or into CHO cells using the ExpiCHO transient system (ThermoFisher Scientific) kit protocols. ExpiCHO expression followed protocols outlined by ThermoFisher for a co-transfection of plasmid containing gene sequence encoding for an IgG light and an IgG heavy chain. For HEK293 expression, equal amounts by weight of heavy chain plasmid and light chain plasmid were co-transfected. Cells were allowed to grow for 7 days after which supernatants were collected for antibody purification. Antibodies were screened for binding to protein A sensors via Octet QKe quantitation (Pall ForteBio Corp, Menlo Park, CA, USA). Constructs which bound to protein A were purified and quantified as described in Strietzel *et al.* for protein quality.

EXAMPLE 2

Target binding affinity and potency assay

[000181] Affinity for each mAb was assessed by Biacore and the IC50 was determined via a suitable cell based potency assay. Surface Plasmon Resonance was performed on a Biacore T200 (GE Healthcare, Pittsburgh, PA) to measure binding affinities of each antibody to its target, 2.5 µg/ml of each target protein was immobilized by amine coupling using EDC/NHS for a final density ~250 RU (resonance unit) on CM5 sensor flow cells 2-4, respectively.

[000182] Flow cell 1 was used as an internal reference to correct running buffer effects. Antibody binding was measured at 15°C with a contact time of 250 s and flow rate of 30 µl/min. The dissociation period was 300 s. Regeneration was performed with regeneration buffers (10 mM Glycine pH1.5 and 10 mM NaOH) and flow rate at 20 µl/min for 60 s each.

5 Running/dilution buffer (1X HBS-EP, GE Healthcare, BR-1006-69, 10X including 100 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl, 30 mM EDTA and 0.5% v/v surfactant P20, pH7.4, 1:10 in filtered MQ H₂O) was used as negative control at the same assay format.

[000183] Data were analyzed with Biacore T200 Evaluation software by using the method of double referencing. The resulting curve was fitted with the 1:1 binding model. No differences

10 in binding affinities or IC₅₀ were observed between wild-type and S434 and S428 mutant IgGs (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Affinities and potencies of WT and S434 and S428 mutant IgGs. No differences were measured between the WT and mutant IgGs:

mAb	Wild-Type		S434H Mutant		S428L Mutant	
	Affinity for target	IC ₅₀	Affinity for target	IC ₅₀	Affinity for target	IC ₅₀
mAb1	2.23E-11	ND			2.28E-11	ND
mAb2	2.30E-11	0.69 nM			8.00E-12	0.58 nM
mAb3	5.82E-13	0.036 nM	1.32E-12			

ND refers to not-determined.

15 mAb1 refers to felinized anti-IL31 antibody. Anti-IL31 antibody is well known in the art. *See e.g.*, U.S. Patents 10,526,405; 10,421,807; 9,206,253; 8,790,651. mAb2 and mAb3 refer to felinized anti-NGF antibodies. Anti-NGF antibody is also well known in the art. *See e.g.*, U.S. Patents 10,125,192; 10,093,725; 9,951,128; 9,617,334; and 9,505,829.

EXAMPLE 3

***In vitro* FcRn Binding assay**

[000184] Feline FcRn was isolated, prepared and mutant Fc IgGs were assayed against feline FcRn according to Strietzel *et.al*. Standard RACE PCR was used to amplify feline FcRn- α subunit and β -microglobulin. FcRn- α subunit and β -microglobulin were co-transfected into HEK 293 cells and the FcRn complex was purified by IMAC affinity purification via the c-terminal His tag. KD's were measured by Biacore 3000 or Biacore T200 (GE Healthcare,

25 Pittsburgh, PA, USA) using a CM5 sensor chip.

[000185] FcRn was immobilized on the surface of the sensor using the standard amine immobilization method to reach the desired surface density. HBS-EP was used as the immobilization running buffer and 10mM MES; 150mM NaCl; 0.005% Tween20; 0.5 mg/mL

- BSA; pH6 and pH7.2 and PBS; 0.005% Tween20; 0.5 mg/mL BSA; pH7.4 were used for method running buffers and titrations. Fc mutant IgGs were flowed over receptor surfaces and affinity was determined using Scrubber2 software analysis (BioLogic Software Pty, Ltd., Campbell, Australia) or T200 evaluation software (**Table 2**). Blank runs containing buffer only were subtracted out from all runs. Flow cells were regenerated using 50 mM Tris pH8. Runs were performed at 15 °C.

[000186] Mutations made at position 434 and 428 have a marked effect on the affinity of the IgG to FcRn at pH6. This study reveals that the increase in FcRn affinity for IgG is not dependent on the VHVL domains, and is universal for any feline IgG1a.

- 10 **Table 2.** Binding of wild-type (WT), N434 and S428 mutant IgGs to Feline FcRn measured by surface plasmon resonance (Biacore):

mAb	Wild-Type		S434H Mutant		S428L Mutant	
	FcRn pH6	FcRn pH7.2	FcRn pH6	FcRn pH7.2	FcRn pH6	FcRn pH7.2
mAb1	1.21E-08	NBO			3.77E-09	1.80E-07
mAb2	2.50E-08	3.80E-07			1.51E-09	6.00E-08
mAb3	2.95E-09	8.63E-06	1.02E-09	5.24E-10		

NBO refers to no binding observed.

- 15 **Table 3.** Binding of wild-type (WT) and N434 mutant IgGs to Feline FcRn measured by surface plasmon resonance (Biacore):

	Wild-Type		Mutant	
	FcRn pH6	FcRn pH7.2	FcRn pH6	FcRn pH7.2
Wild-Type	2.95E-09	8.63E-06		
S434A			4.49E-09	4.59E-12
S434C			1.18E-08	2.91E-12
S434D			5.66E-09	5.34E-07
S434E			3.35E-09	1.25E-09
S434F			7.45E-10	2.10E-08
S434G			9.58E-09	2.16E-08
S434I			1.44E-08	1.81E-08
S434K			6.76E-09	5.06E-09
S434L			8.67E-09	6.57E-09
S434M			2.80E-09	1.92E-09
S434N			6.94E-09	8.47E-12
S434P			5.64E-09	1.57E-11
S434Q			4.80E-09	8.01E-11
S434R			1.19E-09	1.63E-08
S434T			1.06E-08	4.12E-12
S434V			3.71E-09	4.30E-12

S434W			7.71E-10	2.16E-08
S434Y			4.33E-10	1.44E-08

EXAMPLE 4

Fc mutant IgG PK Studies in cats

[000187] Pharmacokinetic (PK) studies were conducted to show the effect of the half-life extension mutations S434H and S428L on a IgG1a subclass with mAbs raised against multiple targets. Study designs varied but essentially two types of studies were conducted:

[000188] Study design 1: The mAb was administered to groups of 4 male and 4 female domestic short hair cats at 2 mg/kg per dose. The first and second doses were administered subcutaneously 28 days apart. The third dose was administered intravenously 28 days later. Serum samples were collected weekly for 14 weeks.

[000189] Study design 2: The mAb was administered as a single dose of 2 mg/kg subcutaneously or intravenously to groups of 3 or 4 domestic short hair cats. Serum samples were collected weekly.

[000190] Pharmacokinetic calculations were performed using the noncompartmental approach (linear trapezoidal rule for AUC calculations) with the aid of Watson™. Additional calculations were performed with Excel™, including correction of the AUC for the overlap of the concentration-time profiles after the 2nd and 3rd injections of drug. Summaries of concentration-time data and pharmacokinetic data with simple statistics (mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation) were calculated using Excel™ or Watson™. No other statistical analyses were conducted.

Table 4. Calculated Half-Life's for wild-type and S428L and S434H mutant feline IgGs:

IgG	Half-Life (days)
mAb1 WT	11.3
mAb1 S428L	26
mAb2 WT	7.9
mAb2 S428L	23
mAb3 WT	10.1
mAb3 S434H	13.2

mAb1 refers to felinized anti-IL31 antibody. Anti-IL31 antibody is well known in the art. *See e.g.*, U.S. Patents 10,526,405; 10,421,807; 9,206,253; 8,790,651. mAb2 and mAb3 refer to felinized anti-NGF antibodies. Anti-NGF antibody is also well known in the art. *See e.g.*, U.S. Patents 10,125,192; 10,093,725; 9,951,128; 9,617,334; and 9,505,829.

[000191] The feline IgG1a point mutation S428L has been shown to increase the half-life of three different feline IgGs in domestic short hair cats. For mAb 1 the half-life increased from 11 days to 26 days, and for mAb2 from 7.9 days to 23 days. The feline IgG1a point mutation
5 S434H has been shown to increase the half-life of one mAb from 10.1 days to 13.2 days.

[000192] The mechanism of action is via enhancing affinity to feline FcRn at pH6 and it has been demonstrated with multiple feline IgGs, that bind very different and distinct soluble targets. Therefore, it has been demonstrated that the half-life extension of S428L and N434 mutations of feline IgG1a is independent of the VHVL domains.

10

EXAMPLE 5

FcRn Binding assay

[000193] Feline FcRn was isolated, prepared and mutant Fc IgGs were assayed against feline FcRn according to Strietzel *et.al.*, discussed above. Standard PCR was used to amplify feline FcRn- α subunit and β -microglobulin. FcRn- α subunit and β -microglobulin were co-transfected
15 into HEK 293 cells and the FcRn complex was purified by IMAC affinity purification via the c-terminal His tag. FcRn complex was biotin labeled through BirA enzymatic biotinylation reaction. KD's were measured by Biacore T200 (GE Healthcare, Pittsburgh, PA, USA) or Biacore 8K (Cytiva, Marlborough, MA, USA) using a SA sensor chip.

[000194] FcRn was captured on the surface of the sensor using a modified SA capture method.
20 10mM MES; 150mM NaCl; 0.005% Tween20; 0.5 mg/mL BSA; pH6 was used as capture, method running buffer and titrations. 1x HBS-P, 0.5 mg/mL BSA; pH7.4 was also used for method running buffer and titrations. Fc mutant IgGs were flowed over receptor surfaces and affinity was determined using T200 evaluation software or Biacore Insight Evaluation software. Blank runs containing buffer only were subtracted out from all runs. Flow cells were
25 regenerated using 50 mM Tris pH8 or pH9. Runs were performed at 15 °C.

[000195] Mutations made at respective positions have a marked effect on the affinity of the IgG to FcRn at pH6. Binding of wild-type (WTs) and mutant IgGs to feline FcRn were measured by surface plasmon resonance (Biacore).

[000196] The marked effect on the affinity was observed in completely different and
30 structurally different antibodies that bind different targets (i.e., anti-IL31 and anti-NGF

antibodies) and also different versions of antibodies that bind the same target (i.e., different versions of anti-IL31 and anti-NGF antibodies) (Tables 1-5). Therefore, the increase in FcRn affinity for IgG is not dependent on the VHVL domains or CDR regions. In addition, the marked effect on the affinity was observed in multiple IgG subclasses. Generally, the results show that the increase in FcRn affinity for IgG is independent of feline IgG subclass.

Table 5A. Binding of wild-type (WT) and S428 and S434 mutant IgGs to feline FcRn

Mutations	Feline IgG subclass	mAb4			mAb3		
		ID No.	KD pH6	KD pH7.4	ID No.	KD pH6	KD pH7.4
WT	IgG1a	1	3.20E-08	NBO	88	2.60E-08	NBO
S428A	IgG1a	2	6.64E-08	NBO	89	2.23E-08	NBO
S428C	IgG1a	3	2.90E-08	NBO	90	2.62E-08	NBO
S428D	IgG1a	4	1.90E-07	NBO	91	5.68E-08	NBO
S428E	IgG1a	5	3.79E-08	NBO	92	5.74E-08	NBO
S428F	IgG1a	6	2.97E-08	NBO	93	6.75E-09	NBO
S428G	IgG1a	7	NBO	NBO	94	8.77E-08	NBO
S428H	IgG1a	8	2.55E-08	NBO	95	5.33E-08	NBO
S428I	IgG1a	9	1.67E-08	NBO	96	2.22E-08	NBO
S428K	IgG1a	10	2.14E-08	NBO	97	2.22E-08	NBO
S428L	IgG1a	11	1.55E-08	NBO	98	1.54E-08	NBO
S428M	IgG1a	12	1.88E-08	NBO	99	6.89E-09	NBO
S428N	IgG1a	13	4.90E-08	NBO	100	1.12E-08	NBO
S428P	IgG1a	14	NBO	NBO	101	1.78E-08	NBO
S428Q	IgG1a	15	NBO	NBO	102	7.13E-08	NBO
S428R	IgG1a	16	NBO	NBO	103	2.73E-08	NBO
S428T	IgG1a	17	NBO	NBO	104	2.58E-08	NBO
S428V	IgG1a	18	6.39E-08	NBO	105	1.71E-08	NBO
S428W	IgG1a	19	NBO	NBO	106	1.85E-08	NBO
S428Y	IgG1a	20	6.34E-08	NBO	107	5.82E-08	NBO
S428L and S434H	IgG1a	22	1.77E-08	NBO	109	1.31E-08	NBO
S428L and S434F	IgG1a	23	8.47E-08	NBO	110	3.38E-09	2.00E+07
S428L and S434L	IgG1a	24	9.72E-08	NBO	111	3.12E-10	2.04E+14
S428L and S434P	IgG1a	25	2.25E-06	NBO	112	1.88E-08	NBO
S428L and S434W	IgG1a	26	1.72E-08	NBO	113	2.36E-08	NBO
S428Y and S434H	IgG1a	27	1.88E-08	NBO	114	3.25E-09	1.17E+11
S428Y and S434F	IgG1a	28	1.89E-08	NBO	115	2.94E-09	3.62E+08
S428Y and S434L	IgG1a	29	4.40E-08	NBO	116	3.43E-08	NBO
S428Y and S434P	IgG1a	30	4.06E-08	NBO	117	1.66E-08	NBO
S428Y and S434W	IgG1a	31	7.80E-09	4.31E-07	118	8.12E-10	2.55E+06
S428M and S434H	IgG1a	32	1.72E-08	NBO			
S428M and S434F	IgG1a	33	4.29E-09	4.01E-06			
S428M and S434L	IgG1a	34	2.83E-08	NBO			
S428M and S434P	IgG1a	35	4.20E-08	NBO			
S428M and S434W	IgG1a	36	6.83E-09	5.01E-06			
S428M and S434L	IgG1a	49	1.86E-08	NBO	131	1.39E-08	NBO
S428M and S434P	IgG1a	50	3.98E-08	NBO	132	2.61E-08	NBO
S434H	IgG1a	00	4.88E-09	NBO	00	2.60E-09	NBO
WT	IgG1b	56	9.08E-08	NBO	138	2.91E-09	NBO
S428L	IgG1b	57	1.66E-08	NBO	139	8.44E-08	NBO
S434H	IgG1b	58	1.51E-08	NBO	140	9.85E-09	NBO
WT	IgG2_hinge	59	4.44E-08	NBO	141	2.79E-08	NBO
S428L	IgG2_hinge	60	2.45E-08	NBO	142	1.12E-08	NBO

Mutations	Feline IgG subclass	mAb4			mAb3		
		ID No.	KD pH6	KD pH7.4	ID No.	KD pH6	KD pH7.4
S428M	IgG2 _{hinge}	61	8.10E-08	NBO	143	1.51E-08	NBO
S434H	IgG2 _{hinge}	62	2.55E-08	NBO	144	1.31E-08	NBO
S434F	IgG2 _{hinge}	63	1.91E-08	NBO	145	4.04E-09	3.61E-05
S428L and S434H	IgG2 _{hinge}	64	2.07E-08	NBO	146	2.45E-09	7.42E-06
S428L and S434F	IgG2 _{hinge}	65	6.31E-09	NBO	147	3.48E-10	4.93E-08
S428M and S434H	IgG2 _{hinge}	66	2.41E-08	NBO	148	6.67E-09	2.39E-05
S428M and S434F	IgG2 _{hinge}	67	1.07E-08	NBO	149	1.43E-09	1.08E-07

mAb4 and mAb3 refer to felinized anti-IL31 (ZTS-5864) and anti-NGF (ZTS-768) antibodies, respectively. mAb3 in this table and Tables 1, 2, and 4 above are the same (i.e., ZTS-768). However, mAb3 in this table has different VL, VH, and CDR regions, relative to mAb2 antibody listed in Tables 1, 2, and 4. NBO = No binding Observed.

5

Table 5B. Binding of wild-type (WT) and S428 and S434 mutant IgGs to feline FcRn

Mutations	Feline IgG subclass	mAb4			mAb5		
		ID No.	KD pH6	KD pH7.4	ID No.	KD pH6	KD pH7.4
S428L	IgG1a	11	1.55E-08	NBO	68	8.65E-09	NBO
S428M and S434L	IgG1a	49	1.86E-08	NBO	81	1.86E-08	NBO
S428M and S434P	IgG1a	50	3.98E-08	NBO	82	3.32E-08	NBO

mAb4 and mAb5 refer to felinized anti-IL31 antibodies. mAb4 has different VL, VH, and CDR regions, relative to mAb5.

NBO = No binding Observed.

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[000197] Having described preferred embodiments of the invention, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the precise embodiments, and that various changes and modifications may be effected therein by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope or spirit of the invention as defined in the appended claims.