Acupuncture treatment of canine keratoconjunctivitis sicca

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OBJECTIVES

Canine keratoconjunctivitis sicca (cKCS) is commonly seen in small animal practice and generally treated successfully using cyclosporine 0.2% (Optimmune, Schering Plough). However this is not an option in all cases. Acupuncture is a discipline which has had increased attention recently in the field of analgesia and the treatment of musculoskeletal conditions in both medical and veterinary fields. There has been some work investigating its use in the treatment of human dry eye syndrome. This study investigates the use of acupuncture as a treatment for cKCS.

METHODS

Ten dogs were used with informed owner consent. Four were already on tear replacement therapy (Viscotears, Allergan) but none was being treated with topical cyclosporine. Each eye was evaluated for conjunctival hyperaemia, ocular irritation and discharge and tear production was measured using the Schirmer Tear Test (STT) at each examination. Acupuncture was performed using acupuncture points GV14, ST8, GB1, GB20, ST36, KI3/BL60 over four treatment sessions. Dogs were reassessed every two weeks. STT results were compared with a Student's t test with statistical significance deemed to have been realized at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

Mean tear production increased from 7.2 ± 5.4 mm to 10.2 ± 5.9 mm, these values differing significantly at $p < 0.001$. Irritation was significantly lowered as was conjunctival hyperaemia. Using the owner's assessment the dogs quality of life was increased for each animal.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

This preliminary study, showing increased tear production in dogs with keratoconjunctivitis sicca following acupuncture, suggests that this may be a treatment for KCS worthy of further investigation.

Is previous glucocorticoid therapy associated with likelihood of diabetic relapse among cats in diabetic remission?

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OBJECTIVES

Previous glucocorticoid therapy is associated with greater likelihood of diabetic remission in cats, but some cats experience a future relapse of diabetes mellitus (DM). This study investigated DM relapse rate among cats in diabetic remission examined in UK primary-care practice, and assessed whether glucocorticoid treatment prior to cats' original DM diagnosis affected likelihood of relapse.

METHODS

A retrospective cohort study was conducted using electronic patient record data collected through the VetCompass Programme. Cats in diabetic remission were identified and episodes of DM relapse within 2 years of stopping insulin were recorded. Kaplan-Meier estimator assessed cumulative probability of relapse and log-rank test assessed whether likelihood of relapse significantly differed between cats with, and without, a history of glucocorticoid treatment in the 90 days before original DM diagnosis.

RESULTS

Fifty-three cats in remission (35 male, 18 female) were identified, with mean age 13.4 ± 3.2 years. Twenty-four (45.3%) received glucocorticoids in the 90 days before DM diagnosis (GC group) and 29 (54.7%) did not (Non-GC group). Twenty cats (37.7%) experienced DM relapse within 2 years, and median time to relapse was 215 (range 41–669) days. Two-year cumulative probability of relapse was 49.4% (95% confidence interval 34–67%). Relapse rate was greater in the non-GC group (14 cats, 48%) than in the GC group (6 cats, 25%) ($p = 0.013$).

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

Longstanding remission is more likely in cats with a history of glucocorticoid treatment prior to DM diagnosis. This could be secondary to lasting improvements in insulin sensitivity and β -cell function after glucocorticoid therapy has been withdrawn.