Oral presentations

agree, but the author's value matched the reference, this was deemed a reading error.

RESULTS

Nine participants had errors attributed to inadequate mixing. One with and eight without the SOP ($p=0.069$).

Ten participants had errors attributed to incorrect reading. One with the SOP and nine without ($p=0.035$).

95% of the results were within 0.0125 l/l and 0.09 l/l in those with and without the SOP.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

This study confirms that a standard operating procedure reduces the operator variation with this technique and improves the accuracy of the obtained results.

Use of a pet blood donation by-product in canine immunology research

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OBJECTIVES

Dendritic cells are professional antigen presenting cells, which are used *in vitro* to investigate the early stages of cell-mediated immunity. The potential role of dendritic cells for immunotherapy, particularly in the context of stimulating anti-tumour immunity, has led to several studies which have generated these cells from blood-derived monocytes. Advances in veterinary transfusion medicine have enabled the establishment of canine blood donation clinics, which routinely collect and store

blood from pet dogs. In the present study we show that canine dendritic cells can be generated from cells extracted from leukocyte reduction filters, normally a disposable by-product of blood donation.

METHODS

Monocyte enriched cultures were grown *in vitro* for 7 days in the presence of canine granulocyte-macrophage colony stimulating factor, canine interleukin 4 and human Flt3-ligand.

RESULTS

Cultured cells demonstrated typical dendritic cell morphology and were shown to express high levels of MHC Class II by flow cytometry.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

In line with the 3Rs principle to reduce replace and refine the use of animals in scientific research, this protocol will enable the generation of dendritic cells from a wide range of dog breeds and MHC-types for use in future immunological studies.

Age and breed related variation in white blood cells in privately owned dogs in the United Kingdom

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OBJECTIVES

Standard haematological markers are widely used in small animal veterinary medicine to monitor health. Reference intervals are wide, representing large, diverse populations.

This study aimed to examine age and breed related variation in canine white blood cells (WBCs) in the UK.

METHODS

Results of 6882 haematological panels of privately owned canine blood donors enrolled in The Pet Blood Bank UK programme were retrospectively collected. Donor profiles were excluded if date of birth, breed, sample date or unique donor number were not registered. Of enrolled profiles 5928 met the inclusion criteria and were used for multivariate regression analysis, with crossbreeds as reference standard.

RESULTS

All WBC lines showed age and breed related variation. Age related effects were still present if dog fixed variables (e.g. breed, gender, geographical location) were included in the analysis. WBCs all showed a parabolic relationship to age within provided reference intervals, decreasing from one year, showing a nadir around seven years, increasing afterwards. All breed related variation was seen within provided reference ranges, except for

monocyte concentrations in German Shepherds (mean=0.82, sd=0.21, $p<0.01$) and Rottweilers (mean=0.83, sd=0.23, $p<0.01$), which were significantly elevated above upper reference. Significantly higher average lymphocyte concentrations in Golden Retrievers (mean=3.82, sd=0.08, $P<0.001$), lower average monocyte concentrations in Dobermanns (mean=0.59, sd=0.21, $P<0.001$), and higher average eosinophil concentrations

in Rottweilers (mean=1.22, sd=0.10, $P<0.001$) were seen compared to crossbreeds averages.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

In the future more specific reference intervals should be considered encompassing age and breed related WBC variation.

Management of canine immune-mediated haemolytic anemia: a survey of primary practitioners and specialists in the United Kingdom

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OBJECTIVES

Immune mediated haemolytic anaemia (IMHA) in dogs is challenging to manage, with no current consensus within the veterinary profession on best treatment. This study aimed to explore the diagnostic and therapeutic decisions that veterinary surgeons are currently taking when treating dogs with IMHA using an online questionnaire.

METHODS

The survey was created using the online survey provider 'Survey Monkey', with a combination of multiple choice and free text questions. It was distributed to veterinarians throughout the UK via email using the RCVS 'find a vet' database, the Royal Veterinary College continuing professional development database, and social media. Data were collected and descriptive statistics performed.

RESULTS

A total of 247 respondents participated in the survey, including first opinion practitioners (89.1%) and internal medicine or emergency and critical care diploma holders (10.9%). Most respondents (94%) identified glucocorticoids as their drug of first choice, with starting doses ranging from 1–5 mg/kg/day. Among respondents, 65.9% indicated that they use combination immunosuppressive therapy, with 43% using more than 1 drug from the point of diagnosis. The most commonly used agents alongside glucocorticoids were azathioprine (76.4%) and ciclosporin (56.5%). Prophylactic anti-thrombotic therapy was not used commonly, with 46.7% of respondents indicating they do not use anti-thrombotics at all.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

The results of this survey highlight the wide variety of treatment strategies currently being used to manage IMHA in dogs, and the need to further disseminate up-to-date knowledge based on existing evidence regarding the management of canine IMHA to better guide us when treating this disease.

Prevalence and disease associations in feline thrombocytopenia: a retrospective study of 194 cats

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OBJECTIVES

This study is a retrospective evaluation of thrombocytopenic cats assessing the prevalence of thrombocytopenia, diseases most commonly associated with thrombocytopenia and association with retroviral infection.

METHODS

Laboratory records from September 2008 to January 2017 were reviewed. Haematology reports were eligible if the automated platelet count was $<200 \times 10^9/l$ and was