(95% CI: 7.00–7.70). Pendulous-eared dogs had 1.79 times the odds of otitis externa compared with dogs with erect ears (95% CI: 1.53–2.10, $P < 0.001$). Males had 1.23 times the odds of otitis externa compared with females (95% CI 1.11–1.36, $P < 0.001$). Insured dogs had 1.42 times the odds of otitis externa compared with uninsured dogs (95% CI: 1.24–1.62, $P < 0.001$).

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

This study confirms predisposition to otitis externa in pendulous-eared dogs. In future, veterinarians should be extra vigilant about otic examination and owner education in these breeds in order to improve prevention and management of this debilitating and often recurrent disease.

Ingestion of unsuitable material and emesis induction at home – A survey among dog owners

Minna Suokko, Terttu Lamminen

Orion Corporation Orion Pharma, Espoo, Finland

OBJECTIVES

The aim was to collect information on how often and what kind of unsuitable material dogs accidentally ingest at home, and which measures the owners usually take.

METHODS

Dog owners were contacted via social media in the UK and by email in the US to respond to an online survey (Webropol 2.0).

RESULTS

473 dog owners (UK: 269, US: 204) completed the survey. 88% of all dogs had sometimes eaten something unsuitable (e.g. foreign objects, human food toxic for dogs, medicines, other poisonous material or excessive amount of food), 75% more than once and 24% even more than 5 times. This is not just a puppy behaviour as only 23% of the dogs eating unwanted things were younger than 1 year.

After these incidences, about half of the owners contacted a veterinarian. Advice was also sought from friends, breeders, and internet. Hardly any owners induced vomiting at home without consulting anyone. The most commonly used emetic substances were table salt and hydrogen peroxide. 22% of the owners answering the survey reported having succeeded in inducing emesis (with or without consultation).

If available, 74% of the owners would be interested in using a prescription medicine to safely induce vomiting at home. However, most owners (86%) would still consult a veterinarian to check if induction of vomiting is the right option.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

The survey increases the knowledge about dogs' habit of eating unsuitable material and the consequent measures taken at home including owners' willingness to consult a veterinarian in those situations.

Utility of C-reactive protein as a biomarker of remission in immune-mediated polyarthritis in dogs

Aimee Taylor¹, Jenny Reeve¹, Vicki Black², Fiona Whitworth²

¹ The University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom
² Langford Vets, Bristol, United Kingdom

OBJECTIVES

To assess the validity of C-reactive protein (CRP) as a biomarker of resolution of neutrophilic joint inflammation

in dogs undergoing treatment for immune-mediated polyarthritis (IMPA).

METHODS

Medical records at Langford Vets were retrospectively reviewed to identify dogs diagnosed with type I or III IMPA between 2016 and 2019. Dogs were required to have undergone re-examination including CRP analysis and arthrocentesis, from at least three joints, within six weeks of diagnosis. CRP was compared to joint cytology. The hypothesis was that CRP would represent a sensitive marker for neutrophilic inflammation compatible with ongoing joint inflammation in dogs undergoing treatment for IMPA.

RESULTS

Nine dogs were included in the study. At the time of re-assessment all dogs were receiving prednisolone (1.9–2.1mg/kg/day) and two cases were also receiving

leflunomide (2mg/kg/day). CRP concentration in all nine dogs was <5 mg/l (laboratory reference <5mg/l). Six dogs (66.7%) had abnormal synovial fluid with an increased proportion of neutrophils in at least one joint despite normal CRP.

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

CRP, in this cohort of dogs, was not a reliable biomarker of resolution of neutrophilic joint inflammation. Monitoring of IMPA remission with repeated joint fluid analysis is proposed until a more sensitive and specific surrogate marker is identified.

Which dogs are more at risk of leptospirosis in the UK?

Collette Taylor, Dave Brodbelt, Brian Catchpole, Dan O'Neill

Royal Veterinary College, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

OBJECTIVES

To help clinicians understand risk factors for leptospirosis in the UK dog population

METHODS

A retrospective study, using 243 confirmed cases of leptospirosis based on samples submitted to IDEXX Laboratories and APHA Weybridge between 2013–2019 were compared against a VetCompass[®] denominator population of 905,543 dogs. Of the cases, 106 (44%) were confirmed using the microscopic agglutination test (MAT) and 137 (56%) using PCR. Multivariable logistic regression was used to evaluate age, breed, Kennel Club

(KC) breed group, sex and neuter status as risk factors for leptospirosis diagnosis ($P < 0.05$).

RESULTS

Age was associated with increasing odds of disease: dogs >1–<5y had 2.71 times odds of infection (95%CI 1.83–4.02) and dogs >5–<8y had 2.11 times odds of infection (95%CI 1.33–3.34) when compared with dogs <1 year. Dogs between 8–20 years old had 2.84 times higher odds (95%CI 2.08–5.27) than dogs <1 year. Four KC breed groups had increased odds compared to non-KC recognised dogs: Terriers (1.27 OR, 95%CI 0.74–2.17), Toy (24.32 OR 95%CI 3.34–175.71), Utility (2.42 OR, 95%CI 1.14–5.13) and Working (1.18 OR, (95%CI 0.50–2.75). When compared to crossbreeds, all purebreeds had reduced odds of infection. Neutered dogs had 1.43 higher odds of infection than entire dogs (95%CI 1.02–2.00). Sex was not significantly associated with infection ($P = 0.30$).

STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

There is increasing vaccine hesitancy amongst pet owners, especially as dogs get older. The key finding of this study, that older dogs have higher odds of leptospirosis infection, provides an evidence base for veterinarian-owner discussions that may recommend continued vaccination for leptospirosis in the older dog population.

Scooting bums: prevalence and risk factors for anal sac disease

Alison Toetz, Camilla Pegram, Dave Brodbelt, David Church, Dan O'Neill

Royal Veterinary College, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

OBJECTIVES

Anal sac disease is frequently diagnosed in dogs under primary veterinary care but there is limited evidence on risk factors. This study aimed to determine prevalence and risk factors for anal sac disease and assess associations with otitis externa.

METHODS

Dogs diagnosed with anal sac disease were identified from anonymized electronic patient records from the VetCompass[™] database. Multivariable logistic regression analysis evaluated risk factors.

RESULTS

From 22,333 dogs, 1248 (5.6) were diagnosed with anal sac disease. Risk factors included smaller breeds (e.g. Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Odds Ratio (OR): 2.93, 95% CI 2.18–3.95, $P < 0.001$ compared to cross breeds), and lower bodyweight. Dogs < 3 years of age had 0.77 (95% CI 0.61–0.98, $P = 0.039$) times the odds compared with dogs ≥ 12 years. Neutered females had 1.28 (95% CI 1.08–1.53, $P = 0.005$) times the odds compared with entire females. Insured dogs had 0.78 (95% CI 0.67–0.91, $P = 0.002$) times the odds compared with uninsured dogs. Dogs with anal sac disease had 1.83 (95% CI 1.53–2.19, $P < 0.001$) times the odds of otitis externa, compared to dogs without anal sac disease.

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