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?

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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

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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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STATEMENT (CONCLUSIONS)

This study identified an association between anal sac disease and otitis externa highlighting that these conditions

should not be considered in isolation. Understanding risk factors can facilitate improved treatment, management and prevention of this vexing disease.

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