
Press Release

Dog owners unaware that their pet may be suffering from serious heart disease

-But new study provides hope in the quest to help dogs live longer -

Vancouver, Canada - 30th July 2008: Recently released global research shows that over 50% of dog owners are unaware that their dog may be at risk of heart failure. Heart disease affects one in four dogs over seven years of age¹, yet the lack of knowledge about this serious, life-threatening condition calls for better education amongst dog owners on how to recognise the disease, and how to maintain their dogs' heart health.

These statistics indicate a critical need to raise general awareness about congestive heart failure in dogs. If more dog owners are aware of the disease and the signs to look out for in their pet, heart failure could be detected and treated at an earlier stage, allowing for timely management and a potentially longer and more comfortable life for their dog.

New data were also presented at the 29th World Veterinary Congress that show that dogs with congestive heart failure (CHF) that is due to a condition called myxomatous mitral valve disease (MMVD) live longer when treated with pimobendan (Vetmedin[®]) compared with a commonly used ACE inhibitor³. The results of the QUEST trial, the largest international study of its kind to be conducted amongst dogs with congestive heart failure, are due

to be published in the Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine (JVIM) later this year.

The condition myxomatous mitral valve disease (MMVD) accounts for approximately 75% of all cases of CHF in dogs². MMVD is associated with the thickening of the cusps of the mitral valve (one of the main one-way valves within the heart), affecting the flow of blood from the heart to the rest of the body. Although there is no cure for CHF due to MMVD, there are treatments available to manage the condition, improving the quality and length of the dog's life².

Professor Jens Häggström, lead investigator of the QUEST trial from the University of Uppsala, Sweden, commented that "the QUEST trial is a significant milestone in our efforts to reassure both, veterinarians and dog owners, that there is compelling evidence to show that pimobendan is an effective treatment for CHF that prolongs their dog's life and providing pet and owner with more quality time together."

The QUEST trial was a randomised, positive-controlled, multi-centre trial conducted at 28 sites across 11 countries, and is the largest study of its kind ever conducted in veterinary cardiology. The study compared a pimobendan group with a group treated with benazepril hydrochloride on top of background diuretic therapy. The trial spanned three years and followed dogs to death, euthanasia or treatment failure leading to withdrawal from the trial³.

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Notes to Editors

About the survey

The survey was conducted in May 2008, amongst 1,531 dog owners in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, UK and US.

Useful statistics:

- 80% of respondents described their dog as 'part of the family'
- 81% of respondents follow the advice they receive from their vet
- 49% of respondents did *not* think they had a 'good' understanding of the diseases/conditions to which their dog may be susceptible

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