Obstipation from Feline Pelvic Fractures

Pelvic fractures are common injuries in cats, and even with conservative treatment most cats return to good function. Unfortunately, narrowing of the pelvis can occur, sometimes leading to chronic obstipation and megacolon. This paper describes a pelvic symphyseal distraction-osteotomy technique to alleviate obstruction. A novel metal space of spirally fashioned orthopedic wire was used, with the wire securely fixed to the pelvis. This procedure was successful in 3 cats for at least 1 to 3 years. Detailed instructions can be found in the paper.

COMMENTARY: Chronic obstipation is a potential complication in severe pelvic canal compromise. This paper describes a new technique for increasing the diameter of the pelvic canal that limits disruption of soft tissues and uses readily available materials. The procedure is very well described. Although the number of cases presented is small and follow-up is based on clinical assessment, all cats were defecating normally 1 to 3 years after surgery. No short- or long-term complications occurred. — Eric R. Pope, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVS


Stop the Vomiting

Maropitant (Cerenia) is a NK₁-receptor antagonist that inhibits neurotransmission through the emetic center of the brainstem. This article reports on a large study of its use as in dogs with a wide range of diseases that cause vomiting. In phase I, dogs were randomized in a 1:1 ratio to be given either maropitant or metoclopramide; then hospitalized and videotaped for the first 24 hours. In phase II, dogs were hospitalized only if it was clinically warranted. In both phases, dogs were given either maropitant (1 mg/kg/day SC) or metoclopramide (1 mg/kg/day SC or PO for 3-5 days, divided into 2-3 doses/day). In phase I, 97% of dogs receiving maropitant did not vomit afterward compared with 71% with metoclopramide. The mean number of vomiting episodes was significantly reduced in the maropitant group. In phase II, maropitant was more effective than metoclopramide in treating vomiting on each day of the study. In both studies, vomiting from a variety of causes was more effectively treated with a single daily dose of maropitant than with metoclopramide given 2 or 3 times daily. Study by Pfizer Ltd, Veterinary Medicine Research & Development, Sandwich, Kent, UK

COMMENTARY: Since vomiting is one of the most common reasons dogs are taken to the veterinarian, this antiemetic is great news for practitioners. — Patricia Thomblison, DVM, MS


Do Owners Know When Pets Have Fleas?

Some fleas are carriers of zoonotic disease and other pathogens. This prevalence study was done in the United Kingdom in 31 veterinary practices. The practices were asked to examine every dog and cat that entered the practice during a week of 5 workdays in July 2005. Evidence of fleas and signs of skin disease consistent with flea allergy dermatitis (FAD) were noted. Information was also collected from the pet owners. Fleas were obtained from 28 practices and identified. Almost all fleas collected were Ctenocephalides felis, but 5 other species were also noted, including Pulex irritans, the “human flea.” Of the 2653 dogs examined during the week, 181 (6.82%) had evidence of active flea infestation and 88 dogs had skin lesions suggestive of FAD, but only 71 of the dogs had signs of active flea infestation. Of the 1508 cats examined, 318 (21.09%) had evidence of active flea infestation. Signs suggestive of FAD were seen in 121 cats, of which 103 had signs of active flea infestation. More than half of the dogs with signs of active flea infestation lived in multipet households. Multiple cats in the household significantly increased the risk for flea infestation of other pets. Almost half of the pet owners (49.72% of dog owners and 48.11% of cat owners) were unaware that their pet had fleas. Many were also unaware of the flea life cycle and that developmental stages would be in their home environment. This lack of awareness has potential health and welfare implications for both pets and families.