

Transitional Cell Carcinoma

By Kay McGuire, DVM, MS

The Westie Foundation of America has sponsored several grants over the last few years on the diagnosis and treatment of bladder cancer in Westies. One of our current grants that we support is Grant number D10CA-044 through the Morris Animal Foundation. The most recent report is as follows:

**D10CA-044:
Tavocept use
to Mitigate
Nephrotoxicity
Associated
with Cisplatin
and Piroxicam
Treatment of
Canine Bladder
Cancer, Carolyn
J. Henry, DVM,
University of
Missouri**

PROGRESS UPDATE: A combination of cisplatin, a chemotherapy drug, and piroxicam, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, has generated excellent tumor responses in dogs with bladder cancer; however, this treatment often leads to unacceptable drug-induced toxicity and kidney failure. In this study, researchers from the University of Missouri are evaluating whether adding the drug Tavocept to the treatment protocol will mitigate toxicity. Specifically, they are focusing on the treatment of

transitional cell carcinoma (TCC), the most common form of bladder cancer in dogs. Breeds at increased risk for TCC bladder cancer include



Scottish Terriers, West Highland White Terriers, Shetland Sheepdogs, Beagles, Collies and Airedale Terriers. Researchers are in the early stages of patient enrollment; so far, eight dogs have been enrolled in the study. Although it is too early to analyze any outcome data, the results of the clinical trial so far are encouraging and show dramatic reductions in the treatment time required to administer cisplatin chemotherapy. Current standard protocols for cisplatin administration require more than six hours of fluid

therapy, thus limiting the practical use of the drug in many veterinary clinics. A significant reduction in chemotherapy treatment time will

make it easier for veterinarians to treat bladder cancer and other cisplatin-responsive tumors in private practice.

If you have a Westie with a confirmed biopsy of Transitional Cell Carcinoma which has not received surgical treatment, chemotherapy, or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories and you would like to enroll him in this study, please contact me at kmcsash@aol.com. The dog will have to attend treatment at the

University of Missouri to be involved.



diagnose patella luxation. “Radiographs will only find patellas that are ‘out,’ as in Grade 3 or 4,” Roush says. “They will miss Grade 1 and 2 luxations because the patella may not be displaced at the time of the X-ray. The only way a radiograph can find Grade 1 or 2 luxation is if secondary osteoarthritis is detected; however, osteoarthritis may not be present or may be due to something other than patellar luxation. A physical examination is the diagnostic method of choice.” Not a condition that improves over time, patellar luxation can lead to lameness and osteoarthritis. Medical management includes restricted exercise and nonsteroidal, anti-inflammatory medications for low-grade patella luxation. Surgery, used for more severe, high-grade cases, consists of returning the patella to its proper position to correct the anatomical abnormality. “Dogs with Grades 1 to 3 luxating patella generally have a good to excellent prognosis,” says Roush, noting that even dogs with Grade 4 luxation can have

quality lives with careful monitoring. “The limiting factor is the length of time the luxation has occurred and the degree of secondary osteoarthritis present at the time of surgery,” he says.

Genetically, patellar luxation is most likely a complex genetic disease. Breeders may select against the disease by not breeding dogs diagnosed with it, but this is not complete assurance. This may bring in other unwanted traits so it is important to not cull dogs with quality traits because this could result in reducing genetic diversity. Dogs that carry this mutation also carry other important good genes that breeders may not want to lose from the breed.¹

¹Chihuahua Update, Vol. 9, No. 1, May 2010, Breeders Are Encouraged to Health Test for Patellar Luxation
Editor, Nestlé Purina PetCare, 2T Checkerboard Square,
St. Louis, MO 63164

