



Therapy in dogs with chronic degenerative valve disease before heart failure...What?

WHAT? Really?

I shared this information with you last summer, but it is life changing (quite literally). With many of you new to our newsletter, I wanted to share it once again. No, the full study is still not published, but here is the preliminary news as published in Veterinary Practice News: May 2015

An international clinical trial involving the drug pimobendan showed such positive results in canine heart patients that the researchers ended their work early. Texas A & M University reported March 24 (2015).

The full study, sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc., the maker of Vetmedin (pimobendan) chewable tablets, is expected to be published later.

The research team, which included Texas A&M associate professor Sonya Gordon, DVM, Dipl. ACVIM, conducted what the university called the largest clinical study ever involving dogs suffering from myxomatous mitral valve disease (MMVD).

A group of 360 canine patients was randomly split between those given pimobendan or a placebo in a double-blind study. Sixteen of the dogs were managed at Texas A & M, while the others were seen at 35 other trial centers in the United States and abroad.

Pimobendan was found to delay the onset of clinical signs of congestive heart failure in dogs with increased heart size secondary to preclinical MMVD.

“A mid study analysis in mid-February 2015 indicated that pimobendan is clearly beneficial and did not raise any concern of the administration of pimobendan.” Texas A & M stated.

“Based on the results the interim analysis committee recommended that the study be stopped and the lead investigators...ended the study March 1.”

Besides Dr. Gordon, the lead investigators were Adrian Boswood, VetMB, MRCVS, of the Royal Veterinary College in England and Jens Haggstrom, DVM, Ph.D, Dipl. ECVIM, of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

MMVD is the leading cause of heart disease and heart failure in dogs, according to Texas A & M.

Vetmedin is currently indicated for the management of signs of congestive heart failure in dogs due to atrioventricular valvular insufficiency (AVVI) or dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM). The drug should not be given in cases of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy or aortic stenosis, Boehringer Ingelheim noted.