

RHEUMATISM LIKE SYNDROME IN CANINE

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In the present study, 5 clinical cases of dogs of Pomeranian/Spitz and German Shepherd breed suffering from Rheumatism Like Syndrome (RLS) were evaluated and treated. The symptoms exhibited were inappetance, pain on getting up from sitting position and reluctance to move. The dog had over grown nails. Successful therapeutic management of RLS in dogs is reported.

Key Words: Dog, rheumatism like syndrome.

Introduction

Rheumatism is a disease of muscle, tendons and bones with the cardinal signs of inflammation of the tissues with pain, swelling, increased heat of surrounding tissue and distension of joint capsule altering the function of the joints. Canine rheumatoid arthritis has been reported by many workers (Pederson *et al.*, 1976; Clirc, 1978; Bennelt, 1987 and Roush *et al.*, 1989). Anil *et al.* (2002) reported RLS with the presence of R.A. factor only in 3 dogs out of 13 dogs (23.07%). Wood *et al.* (1980) and Bennelt and Kirkham (1987) reported latex test for detection of canine rheumatoid factor. The meloxicam (Reginster *et al.*, 1996) and prednisolone (Ammara *et al.*, 2010) are among the commonly used drugs for treatment of rheumatism in human being. The present study was undertaken with the aim to find out effective treatment and management of dogs suffering from rheumatism like syndrome.

Case history

Five dogs (Pomeranian, 01; Spitz, 03, German Shepherd, 01) were presented at Canine out-door of College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Bikaner with the complaint of reduced appetite, pain on getting up from sitting position and reluctance to move since last few weeks/months.

Clinical examination

On the clinical examination the dogs exhibited difficulty in weight bearing, walking and felt pain while getting up from sitting position. The affected dogs kept the legs little outward while standing, pain was observed specially on applying gentle pressure on the sternal region or gentle lifting of dogs from sternal region. The dogs were reluctant to move especially down stairs and unable to climb stairs. The dogs had showed dystrophy of gluteal and quadriceps group of muscles. All

the dogs had over grown nails and they produced typical noise on walking on cemented floor due to contact of overgrown /twisted nails first rather than paws.

Based on the clinical observation and recovery after the treatment of the cases were diagnosed as rheumatism like syndrome (RLS).

Therapeutic management

Before starting the therapy, the over grown nails of the ailing dogs were trimmed. The therapy started with meloxicam (Melonex®, Intas) @ 0.2 mg/kg b.wt. IM and prednisolone ((Prednisolone acetate®, Intervet)) @ 2 mg/kg b.wt. IM, once a day, for 3 days. In addition to above treatment Neuroxin M (Zydus AHL), containing Vit. B₁ – 50 mg, Vit. B₆-50 mg and methylcobalamin, an active form of Vit. B₁₂-500 mcg / ml) @ 1 ml/10 kg b. wt. IM for 5 days. The dog owners were advised to give at least 1 km. walk to their dogs daily and regular trimming of nails on 15 days intervals .

Results and discussion

The present study reported RLS in all the 5 dogs, however we did not confirm the absence of rheumatoid factor in all the dogs. The diagnosis was made on the basis of gradual disappearance of clinical symptoms of RLS after the treatment.

With the line of therapy adopted, improvement was noticed from second day onwards but complete recovery seen after 7- 10 days. After trimming of overgrown nails, it was observed that the dog got some relief from pain on walking and getting up.

Presently, it is observed that over grown nails was the predisposing factor in RLS in dogs and when this factor is concurrent with the presence of rheumatoid factor in dogs, recovery from RLS is not favourable or partial as observed in dogs even after the long

treatment with antirheumatic drugs(Anil *et al.*, 2002).



Fig-1 and 2 showing overgrown nails in dogs with RLS

Pederson *et al.* (1976) reported similar non-infective rheumatoid chronic unremitting general erosive polyarthritis. Bennelt (1987) also observed erosive inflammatory joint disease in dogs. The clinical symptoms observed by him were generalized stiffness particularly after rest, and the joints were painful on manipulation, while in the present study we have not observed painful manipulation of joints except on gentle lifting of dogs from sternal region.

Acknowledgement

Authors are thankful to Dean, CVAS, Bikaner (Rajasthan) for providing necessary facilities to carry out the present work.

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