



Using a Prototype Device to Deliver Pain Medications for Dogs with Cancer

GOALS Some dogs with cancer, especially end-stage cancer patients or patients with radiation side effects, experience pain that cannot be adequately controlled with oral medications given by their owners at home. Depending on the site of pain, giving an injection into the spine can be performed to provide pain relief superior to oral medications. The duration of pain relief is variable but may last several weeks. Repeating the injection requires general anesthesia each time and this puts the dog at risk for anesthetic complications, is time consuming, and can get expensive. The Anesthesiology and Analgesia Service at the Cornell University Hospital for Animals (CUHA) is currently investigating using a new device that can be implanted under the skin into the epidural space (space in the spine) to make giving these injections easier. The device consists of an epidural catheter connected to an access port that is implanted under the skin over the dog's back under general anesthesia. Pain-relieving medications can then be injected through the port and catheter into the epidural space. Drugs can be delivered as frequently as necessary to provide pain relief without the need for anesthesia and its risks and costs, and the device can be removed if it is no longer needed.

ELIGIBILITY Any dog suffering from pain due to cancer that is not adequately controlled using oral medications administered at home may be eligible. Dogs that are currently hospitalized at CUHA for cancer treatment may also be eligible.

COMPENSATION Owners are responsible for all of the costs associated with the device including its implantation and follow-up visits. For participation, owners will receive a discount on certain items on their bill for the charges associated with the device and follow-up visits.

OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES The owner will be asked to fill out a simple, brief online questionnaire about their dog's pain before the device is implanted, when the first dose of drugs is given, and at regular intervals thereafter. Owners can return to CUHA for additional injections as often as necessary to control their dog's pain. If the dog is hospitalized at CUHA, the oncologist referring the case and/or Dr. Boesch will determine how often the drugs should be given.

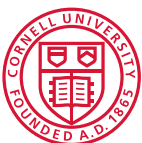


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