



CTDS News

We would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year. This month Nick is giving a talk to the Shropshire Veterinary Association on "The clinical pathology of feline liver and kidney disease". For those of you who can't make it to the meeting in Shrewsbury on the 24th of February but would like copies of the notes and or presentation please give us a call.

Following the recent revisions to the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme and the implications for quality control procedures in the practice laboratory, we have received a number of requests for assistance. As such we have produced what we hope is a simple guide to Quality Control in the laboratory. If you want a copy or simply need advice please call the lab or visit our website here.

As existing clients of CTDS you will have received the good news that we will not be increasing our prices in 2005. If you need any additional copies of the pricelist please let us know.

Diagnosing Pancreatic disease

The laboratory diagnosis of pancreatic disease dogs and cats has taken has made some significant progress in the last few years. Exocrine pancreatic insufficiency (EPI) is now recognised in both dogs and cats and while most



affected animals are young there are a number of older animals that are affected. The canine Trypsin-Like Immunoreactivity (TLI) test is both sensitive and specific for EPI and is assayed as part of the canine intestinal profile together with folate and cobalamin. Feline TLI has been shown similarly to be

an excellent assay for EPI in cats, however this test is currently available only in the USA. As a result, we do not routinely include this test in the feline intestinal profile but we would recommend adding it for all cats with steathorreic faeces and for cats that are thin despite eating well where other causes have been ruled out.

The laboratory diagnosis of canine pancreatitis is complicated by the fact that amylase and lipase quickly return to normal following the onset of clinical signs – so normal results need not exclude pancreatitis. In addition, mild increases in amylase and lipase can be seen with intestinal and hepatic disease and both are affected by reduced renal function. As a result these tests are neither completely sensitive nor specific.

In cats with pancreatitis amylase and lipase are only occasionally abnormal and they are considered of little diagnostic value in this species.

Pancreatic lipase immunoreactivity (PLI) however, holds out considerably more promise for the diagnosis of pancreatitis in the dog and cat. In dogs, PLI elevations appear to persist for longer than other tests and this is now considered the best test for chronic pancreatitis. In cats with pancreatitis, PLI has been reported to be more

sensitive than TLI (70% vs. 30%). This is particularly useful in cats as the clinical signs in this species are often non-specific (lethargy, anorexia, dehydration) with only 35% showing vomiting and 25% showing abdominal pain.

Currently the PLI assay is only available in the USA so the turnaround is about 10 days. It is likely however that we will be able to offer this assay more directly in future.

To request PLI for dogs or cats simply indicate this on the request form (B33) and ensure that an additional 0.75 ml non-lipaemic serum is submitted.

Canine and Feline Intestinal Profiles:

Indications as a starting point for:

- Identification of EPI & small intestinal disease
- Unexplained weight loss despite eating well
- Identification of metabolic causes of GI signs
- B vitamins assist localisation of disease within the small intestine
- Faecal analysis can be added to check for primary intestinal pathogens

Includes:

- Full haematology, biochemistry, TLI (canine), folate & cobalamin.
- Chemistry panel designed specifically to identify changes associated with enteropathies.
- Pathologist interpretation provided (clinical history required).

Price: £39.00 +VAT

For the canine and feline intestinal profile a minimum of 1.5ml separated serum is required in addition to EDTA, smears and a fluoride oxalate. If you have any questions regarding which tests to request please ring Nick at the lab.

Bleeding Devon Rex's.

Nat Whitley, a Diplomate of the European College of Internal Medicine, currently working at Davies Associates is interested in obtaining samples from Devon Rex cats with a history of bleeding problems. This is part of a



study into the vitamin K responsive coagulopathy recognised in this breed. These cats have a combined deficiency of all vitamin K dependent coagulation factors due to a defective vitamin K-dependent carboxylase.

The aim is to try to identify the gene associated with this problem using DNA from EDTA samples.

If you have seen, or know of, Devon Rex's that have presented with abnormal bleeding problems he would be keen to hear from you.

He can be contacted by email to natwhitley@yahoo.co.uk or you can let Nick know at the lab.