Radiation therapy has long been used to treat cancer in animals and humans. Focusing the radiation to treat the tumor avoids damage to surrounding healthy tissue. Computed tomography (CT) provides a 3-D image to accurately locate a tumor within the body. Movement of any type causes a distortion of the CT image. This is especially problematic when imaging lung tumors due to breathing motion. The UW Veterinary Care Radiation Oncology service is comparing lung-imaging methods to help determine the best modality for accurate identification and treatment of pulmonary tumors.

Dogs with any type of lung mass (primary tumor, metastasis or fungal disease) that are undergoing a CT scan as part of their diagnostic evaluation are eligible. Enrolled patients will receive two additional scans (a special CT and fluoroscopy – at no charge). Clients will also receive a $150 credit to their UWVC account. This study is non-invasive and involves imaging tests only. For more information: radonc@vetmed.wisc.edu or 608-263-7600.

How are Studies Funded?

Funding for veterinary research can range from small gifts to large federal grants. Faculty, along with residents, interns and veterinary students, typically apply for funds through a competitive grant process, wherein expert scientists review research proposals and select the ones that are most likely to advance animal health. Common funding sources include the American Kennel Club (AKC), the Morris Animal Foundation, the Veterinary Orthopedic Society, the SVM’s own Companion Animal Research Fund and even the National Institutes of Health. NIH sometimes funds research for diseases shared by humans and companion animals.

Ideas for research studies are generated through discussions in faculty labs, clinic rounds, scientific meetings and even over cups of coffee. The investigator then formulates a plan based on the goals of the study, including the right study design, type and number of patients to enroll and kind of tests to be performed. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) then objectively reviews the study plan to make sure all risks to animals are minimized. The IACUC assures compliance with all federal rules and regulations related to the use of animals in research. Prior to starting all veterinary studies, IACUC approval is required.

Upon approval from a funding agency and IACUC, the investigator moves forward with the study. If approval is denied, the proposal may be revised and resubmitted. Researchers spend a considerable amount of time writing and revising research proposals so they can do the work to advance animal health. For more information on clinical studies funding or other needs, visit the SVM website: vetmed.wisc.edu/research.
Clinical studies involve researching new medications, treatments, tests or devices to determine if they improve patients’ health and well-being. Clinical studies may be called clinical trials or clinical research. All studies have specific criteria regarding species of animal, condition to be treated, current medications, etc. Information on the requirements for each study are included on our website. Check back often for new studies to open. Clinical studies are always voluntary. No animals are entered into a study without the full understanding and permission of the client.

Patients participating in a study may receive treatments not available to the general population. A pet may or may not benefit from this, however, all studies advance scientific knowledge. New drugs and protocols may have side effects and studies may require more frequent visits to the UW Veterinary Care for recheck exams and laboratory tests. All studies are reviewed and require approval by the School of Veterinary Medicine’s Animal Care and Use Committee to assure minimal risk to the patient.

The cost of participation varies with the individual study. Many studies are funded by grants that cover part or all of the treatment costs. All fees are discussed prior to a patient entering a study.

Wanted: Labradors and Rottweilers
Non-contact cruciate rupture (rupture not associated with any known trauma) occurs in about 6% of Labrador Retrievers and 9% of Rottweilers. It is responsible for 20% of canine lameness and burdens U.S. pet owners with at least $1 billion in healthcare costs each year. It is accepted that a majority of ruptures are not associated with trauma, but the reason dogs rupture their ligament is not known. It is likely that part of the risk that an animal has for developing this condition is genetic.

The UW Veterinary Care Orthopaedic Service is recruiting patients to study the genetic heritability of cruciate disease. There are two groups of dogs that currently qualify for the study.
- Labrador Retrievers and Rottweilers with knee problems due to a torn cruciate ligament (torn ACL)
- Any Labrador Retriever or Rottweiler over 8 years of age

For more information, visit uwveterinarycare.wisc.edu/clinical-studies/orthopedics/