Clinical studies generally fall into two categories: clinical trials and observational studies. Clinical trials include testing of new medications and treatments that may improve health and recovery from the condition being studied. Observational studies may review patients’ responses to normal care or may involve collecting samples from healthy dogs for comparison to non-healthy individuals.

Prior to enrolling one’s pet in a clinical study, clients receive a printed copy of an Informed Consent document. This document must be written in easily understood language. It contains information about the research, the treatment (medication, procedure, etc.) being investigated and any potential benefits or risks. Other information includes the duration of the study, alternate procedures or treatments (if applicable) and any compensation. Finally, Informed Consent documents provide the ability to remove one’s pet from a study at any time for any reason.

Other protections for animals enrolled in clinical studies include the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) review of the study prior to its approval and funding. The IACUC assures the study meets the requirements of the animal welfare laws of the National Institutes of Health. (NIH) Stringent oversight by the IACUC ensures the study protocol is appropriate for the condition being investigated and all risks are minimized.

During a study, clinicians, residents and technicians continuously monitor the patients. They assess the patient for improvement or ill effects from the treatment or procedure being investigated. Care providers strictly adhere to all standard of care requirements. If a patient shows stress, illness or side effects, it may be recommended to withdraw the pet from the study.

Clients always have the option to remove their pet from a study, for any reason, without consequences to the patient’s care. Great information on clinical studies can be found at the American Veterinary Medical Association’s Animal Health Studies Database website: ebusiness.avma.org/aahsd/more_info.aspx

Horses Needed for Superficial Digital Flexor Tendon Study

The Large Animal Service is recruiting horses, of all breeds, with superficial digital flexor tendon or suspensory ligament problems. They are investigating a new ultrasound technique to aid in the rehabilitation of tendons in horses. The clinicians are also conducting a study on the genome-wide association of certain tendon injuries in horses. For more information, please contact Dr. Sabrina Bounts (sabrina.brounts@wisc.edu) or by calling 608-263-7600.

For information on all studies, visit our website: uwveterinarycare.wisc.edu/clinical studies
Clinical Studies
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Clinical Study?
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.

2. How can my pet participate?
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 pet owner.

3. What are the benefits or risks?
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.

4. What does it cost?
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 charges are discussed prior to a patient entering a study.

Laryngeal Paralysis
With summer, comes hot weather. Pets are at risk of overheating with exercise and limited access to shade and water. Dogs with laryngeal paralysis are especially susceptible to heat. Laryngeal paralysis is a condition where the larynx (vocal cords) does not move freely. This limits the amount of air moving in and out of the lungs. Dogs with this condition may tire easily, cough more and most especially have a change in their bark and/or develop a high-pitched sound when breathing in.

Two studies on laryngeal paralysis are currently being conducted at the UW Veterinary Care. The first study investigates the benefits of surgery for this condition. Patients’ activity is monitored prior to surgery and compared to their activity after surgery to determine how well surgery improves the quality of their lives. Any dog undergoing arytenoid lateralization (tieback) surgery for laryngeal paralysis qualifies for this study.

The second study is looking for a genetic component to the development of laryngeal paralysis. Golden and Labrador Retrievers, along with other breeds, have a high disposition to developing this condition as they age. Finding a genetic marker for laryngeal paralysis may help in future breeding decisions. Golden and Labrador Retrievers over 11½ years of age, with and without laryngeal paralysis, qualify for the study. Pets may simultaneously enroll in both studies.