Where Can I Find Information on Studies?

Have you wondered if your pet or patient may qualify for a clinical study? How do you know what studies may be available and what the study entails? All of this information is a simple click away on the UW Veterinary Care website. Every month, updates on studies are posted. Simply go to uwveterinarycare.com and click on “Clinical Studies.” On the Studies homepage, you will find Frequently Asked Questions along with links to lists of current studies. The studies are divided into large animal and small animal according to specialty service.

Each specialty, currently conducting a study, also has its own section within the clinical studies webpage. You may click on each specialty to obtain more detailed information. For example, if a dog has developed a cranial cruciate ligament (CCL) tear, go to the Orthopaedics section under clinical studies to obtain information on a study of this condition.

Some studies may be listed in more than one specialty. An example of this is our ongoing bladder tumor study. Bladder cancer is treated through the oncology service. However a small animal internal medicine clinician, with much interest in the genetics of disease, is conducting a study to determine if genetic and/or environmental factors may lead to a high incidence of this type of cancer. Studies, such as this, that cross multiple disciplines provide different knowledge bases, better understanding of the conditions being studied and perhaps more productive treatments.

Not all conditions can be studied within one institution. Our clinicians often collaborate with other specialists around the country to conduct studies. Some studies require large number of participants to provide enough data to obtain meaningful results. This leads to the same study being conducted at multiple veterinary hospitals, at the same time, with a single investigator accumulating all of the data. This is a multi-institutional study.

Alternately, some study protocols allow for remote inclusion of a patient. This means a patient may participate in a study without ever having to travel to the institution conducting the study. An example is UW Veterinary Care’s recently completed study on Sulfa drug allergies. The study was looking at blood samples from dogs that had received Sulfa drugs. Investigators compared bio-markers in the blood of dogs that had developed an allergic reaction to the medication versus dogs who did not develop problems. Blood samples were obtained from dogs at their local veterinary hospitals and sent into the UW Veterinary Care. Patients were able to participate in the study with no additional travel.
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.

Boxer Lymphoma Study
Lymphoma is a fatal cancer of the blood cells of dogs. Lymphoma is more common in Boxers, Golden Retrievers and several other purebreds, which suggest involvement of inherited genes. Research shows mutations in the tumors of dogs with lymphoma, but it is unclear why some of these mutations develop or persist in certain dogs. Better understanding of this process may lead to lymphoma prevention.

Canine lymphoma resembles Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) in people. Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is associated with chemicals found in tobacco smoke, certain household products and pesticides. Glutathione-S-transferase (GST) enzymes break down toxic chemicals in the body and can prevent these chemicals from causing tumor mutations. Because of this, low activity variants of GST enzymes increase the risk of developing NHL.

This study looks for low activity variants in GST genes, which may put boxer dogs at higher risk for lymphoma. In addition, environmental exposures will be assessed by a questionnaire, and the presence of DNA damage will be assessed from a small blood sample.

Any purebred Boxer dog, with or without lymphoma, qualifies for the study. The inside of the patient’s cheek is swabbed to obtain a DNA sample for GST gene sequencing. The client completes a 5-page questionnaire about the dog’s environment. This may be done at the UW Veterinary Care or at the dog’s primary care veterinarian. In some dogs, a small blood sample will be collected for DNA testing.

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