

Owner (Mis)Perceptions of CPR

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In the literature

Oberholtzer JA, Hofmeister EH. Perception of small animal cardiopulmonary resuscitation of owners presenting to a small animal teaching clinic including a large first opinion service. *J Vet Emerg Crit Care*. 2020;30(4):411-417.

FROM THE PAGE ...

Although pet owners at the clinic may be asked whether they want cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) performed if their pet goes into cardiac arrest, public perception of CPR survival rates may be inaccurate. This study used a questionnaire to evaluate owner perceptions of CPR; questions included owner demographics, CPR knowledge, reasons for choosing versus declining CPR, and estimated CPR success rates and costs, as well as whether owners work in healthcare and whether owners watch medical television shows. Pet age and species were also included.

Of the 296 surveys analyzed, almost all owners (92%) provided an appropriate basic definition of CPR. Most respondents (76%) had previously taken a human CPR training course, 11% possessed knowledge of how to perform CPR on a dog or a cat, and 67% elected to have CPR performed on their pet at the current visit if necessary. Owners overestimated the likelihood of survival to discharge from the hospital as compared with reports in current literature, and those that elected

CPR estimated lower costs associated with resuscitation as compared with owners that declined CPR. Respondents who watched television medical dramas estimated higher rates of survival to hospital discharge. Most respondents (76%) wanted the clinician to make the CPR decision in the event of an arrest, and 82% also wanted to discuss CPR status at the veterinary clinic visit.

This study identified inaccurate perceptions and knowledge gaps regarding CPR among pet owners. Considering the vast majority of respondents expressed interest in discussing CPR status with their clinician, clinicians can help by educating owners, thus enabling them to make better-informed decisions.

... TO YOUR PATIENTS

Key pearls to put into practice:

- 1** Owners may have inaccurate perceptions about survival rates following CPR.
- 2** It is important to educate owners about CPR, including costs and anticipated outcomes, so they can provide truly informed consent.
- 3** The Reassessment Campaign on Veterinary Resuscitation (RECOVER) initiative has created evidence-based guidelines for small animal CPR (see **Suggested Reading**); these guidelines are being updated.

Suggested Reading

- Fletcher DJ, Boller M. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation. In: Silverstein DC, Hopper K, eds. *Small Animal Critical Care Medicine*. 2nd ed. Elsevier; 2009:11-17.
- Fletcher DJ, Boller M, Brainard BM, et al. RECOVER evidence and knowledge gap analysis on veterinary CPR: Part 7: Clinical guidelines. *J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio)*. 2012;22(S1):S102-131.