

Disc Disease: NSAIDs or Steroids?

Small breed dogs with presumed Hanson type 1 intervertebral disc disease (IVDD) frequently have hyperpathia. The owners may report them to be restless, to be reluctant to jump, or to have uncharacteristic aggression. Dogs entered into this study had to weigh less than 16 kg and have historical and physical findings consistent with IVDD. They could not have a history of spinal injury or previous back pain or neurologic disease. A total of 328 dogs met the criteria, and 78 cases were eventually evaluated, half of which had a recurrence of presumed IVDD when treated with nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or corticosteroids. Those treated with methylprednisolone sodium succinate (MPSS) or NSAIDs were less likely to have a recurrence than dogs treated with corticosteroids other than MPSS. *Funded by Sarkey's Surgical Laser Laboratory, Oklahoma State University*

COMMENTARY: This study suggests that NSAIDs may be an appropriate alternative to MPSS and are a better choice than other steroids for ambulatory dogs with presumed thoracolumbar IVDD. The article does speculate on the reasons for this, including the impact of steroids on collagen fibrils. Further studies with a control group would give more definitive answers as to whether NSAIDs and MPSS are better than no treatment at all and why. —*Patricia Thomblison, DVM, MS*

Recurrence rate of presumed thoracolumbar intervertebral disc disease in ambulatory dogs with spinal hyperpathia treated with antiinflammatory drugs: 78 cases (1997-2000). Mann FA, Wagner-Mann CC, Dunphy ED, et al. **J VET EMERG CRIT CARE** 17:53-60, 2007. ■