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The Canine Osteoarthritis Staging Tool (COAST) for a new, standardized approach to diagnosing and monitoring dogs with osteoarthritis

Greenfield (IN), U.S., 20th March 2018 - Elanco Animal Health, together with the COAST Development Group, today announce the publication of a proposal for a practical diagnostic aid, called 'COAST' (Canine OsteoArthritis Staging Tool) – A tool expected to improve the diagnosis and monitoring of dogs with osteoarthritis with the potential to guide disease management plans.

Current approaches to the diagnosis and monitoring of canine osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a common, progressive degenerative disease primarily driven by developmental orthopedic disease, and so is initiated in young dogs. Timely diagnosis provides opportunities to implement a continuing patient care plan to control pain, to encourage appropriate levels of activity and to maintain musculoskeletal health. Unfortunately, the lack of a well-defined, standardized system for staging osteoarthritis can lead to delayed diagnosis and inconsistent approaches to patient evaluation, monitoring and treatment.

The Canine OsteoArthritis Staging Tool (COAST)

COAST has been developed by a group of nine experts actively working in the fields of small animal orthopaedics, anaesthesia and pain management. Their aim was to develop a standardized staging system for canine OA, provide guidance on how to use the system most effectively and to make the approach cost effective and applicable for use in primary care practices. In addition, they want to capture both veterinarian and pet owner evaluations of the patient.

The team is proposing a simple grading followed by staging approach, which can be repeated at intervals according to the requirements of the individual patient. The grading steps involve assessment of the joints as well as the dog as a whole, reflecting the extent to which OA can affect the dog. Consolidation of the grades into a measure of overall disease severity enables classification of the patient into one of five COAST stages of OA (Stage 0 to 4, ranging from preclinical with no risk factors to severe OA). The wide international representation within this group of clinicians makes this not only a practical diagnostic aid, but also applicable to a wide geographical area.

Dr Nichola Archer Thompson, global technical marketer for the orthopaedic health category at Elanco, comments: "We have seen the successful implementation of standardised staging systems for other companion animal diseases so the possibility of a similar approach for canine OA is particularly exciting. The "COAST approach" offers so many potential benefits, but the one that stands out for me personally is an optimised pain control and disease management plan for the dogs. This is something that I believe pet owners, veterinarians, the COAST Development Group and Elanco are all striving for".



Elanco Animal Health



The items used to construct COAST were developed from the expert consensus opinion of the COAST Development group. The COAST Development group encourages the use of COAST in veterinary clinics in order to gain feedback for the further validation and optimization of the tool. Please contact the corresponding author Dr Duncan Lascelles (dxlascel@ncsu.edu) or the group email COASTDevGroup@gmail.com

Full details of COAST are available as an open access peer-reviewed article published in *The Veterinary Journal*

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1090023318300583?via%3Dihub>

The COAST Development group members:

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About Elanco

Elanco provides comprehensive products and knowledge services to improve animal health and food-animal production in more than 70 countries around the world. We value innovation, both in scientific research and daily operations, and strive to cultivate a collaborative work environment for nearly 6,250 employees worldwide. Together with our customers, we are committed to raising awareness about global food security, and celebrating and supporting the human-animal bond. Founded in 1954, Elanco is a division of Eli Lilly and Company. Our worldwide headquarters and research facilities are located in Greenfield, Indiana, U.S.A. Visit us at Elanco.com, ElancoEurope.com and EnoughMovement.com.