

ALOPECIA IN DOGS SUBMITTED TO A COMBINED CHEMOTHERAPY WITH DOXORUBICIN AND CYCLOPHOSPHAMIDE

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The goal for cancer chemotherapy is restore health while maintaining a good quality of life. Because common side effects of chemotherapy owners generally do not allow their pets to be treated. The objective of this report is to describe the difficulties found by veterinary doctors when proposing chemotherapy. The excessive concern with toxic effect of anticancer chemotherapy is a limiting factor for owners to authorize it. In the last two years 11 dogs and cats were submitted to chemotherapy at UFPR Veterinary Hospital. Almost all owners were extremely apprehensive with the treatment because, in general, they associate chemotherapy with suffering, mutilation and death. Unfortunately, the cytotoxic drugs will affect bone marrow cells, neurological, digestive, renal, heart and others systems. In general, alopecia, in spite of being reversible, is the worst side effect observed by the owners. Because of that, they did not agree with the treatment. In the observations for the present study it was observed that alopecia occurs more intensely in some breeds of dogs, such as poodles and cockers treated with cyclophosphamide and doxorubicin. Initial hairless in these dogs began around the 20th day after the chemotherapy was initiated and it was confined to the head. Subsequently, hair loss in these dogs occurred over the ventral neck, thorax, abdomen, and over the proximal inner surface of the limbs. During chemotherapy the owner were advised to avoid exposing their pets under the sun between 10 AM and 4 PM because of the possibility of photosensitive reactions and skin hiperpigmentation. Otherwise, the use of shampoos and brushes, the protection of the animals with clothes during the winter time, the maintaining of the pets in locals free from chemical products and sharp objects that could be pruridic and promote skin lesions, respectively were other precautions taken. Alopecia is a depressive factor, that affects the image and social relationship, being considered by the patient as the most devastating and terrible side effect of chemotherapy. Because of that its easily to understand the excessive concern of owners with this side effect. In conclusion, Veterinary doctors should explain to the owners about transient hairless and do not permit esthetic patterns interfere in therapeutic decisions.

Key Words: Alopecia, cytotoxicity, neoplasm, dog, cat.