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PILOT STUDY TO ASSESS EXPRESSION OF 14 MICRORNAS IN CEREBROSPINAL FLUID OF DOGS WITH NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS

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MicroRNA (miRNA) is a class of non-coding RNA that regulates gene expression at a posttranscriptional level. miRNAs are emerging as early prognostic and confirmatory biomarkers of disease. In human medicine, expression of miRNAs in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) has been investigated in various neoplastic, inflammatory and degenerative conditions affecting the central nervous system (CNS). The objective of this study was to investigate the expression of a panel of miRNAs in a cohort of dogs with a variety of neurological disorders.

We investigated the expression of 14 microRNAs (miR-10b-5p, miR-19b, miR-21-5p, miR-30b-5p, miR-103a-3p, miR-124, miR-128-3p, miR-146, miR-155-5p, miR-181c, miR-210, miR-194-5p, miR-633, and miR-922) in cisternal CSF samples of 20 dogs examined at the Hospital for Small Animals of the University of Edinburgh. Clinical history, neurological examination and a combination of diagnostic procedures including MRI, CSF analysis and histopathology were used to reach a diagnosis. The samples were assigned to 5 groups based on the diagnosis; inflammatory conditions (2 dogs with steroid responsive meningitis-arteritis, 1 suspected necrotizing meningoencephalitis, 1 polyradiculoneuritis), neoplastic conditions (2 with suspected histiocytic sarcoma and 2 gliomas), canine degenerative myelopathy (2), idiopathic epilepsy (6) and 4 dogs with neurological signs not associated with CNS disease (2 idiopathic vestibular disease, 1 otitis, 1 soft tissue sarcoma).

Eight of the 14 microRNAs (miR-10b-5p, miR-19b, miR-21-5p, miR-30b-5p, miR-103a-3p, miR-124, miR-128-3p, miR-146) showed a consistent expression among the five groups. In particular, miR-21-5p and miR146 appeared to be upregulated in dogs with neoplastic conditions compared with dogs in other groups.