



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LISBON
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Hyperthyroidism in Cats: a review of cases seen at a first opinion veterinary hospital practice
in the UK

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JURY

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Masters Degree Dissertation in Veterinary Medicine

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RESUMO

Este trabalho é constituído por um estudo retrospectivo e um estudo prospectivo da população de gatos hipertiroideos do hospital veterinário Wylie Veterinary Centre, no Reino Unido, Foi feito um estudo retrospectivo dos 266 casos apresentados no Wylie Veterinary Centre entre 1/8/07 e 31/7/09, com o objectivo de caracterizar a população e avaliar a eficácia e segurança das várias opções terapêuticas. As opções terapêuticas foram tiroidectomia e terapêutica médica com Neo-mercazole® (carbimazol), Felimazole® (metimazol), metimazol líquido e Vidalta® (carbimazol de libertação contínua). Metimazol líquido foi a opção mais eficaz, controlando 69.2% dos casos. Por não se encontrar disponível, a opção disponível mais eficaz é a tiroidectomia unilateral, com 69% de casos controlados. Neo-mercazole® e metimazol líquido constituem as opções mais seguras, não tendo registado quaisquer reacções adversas. Contudo, por já não estarem disponíveis, a opção disponível mais segura é a tiroidectomia unilateral, com apenas 4,8% de complicações. Comparando as opções terapêuticas médicas disponíveis, Vidalta® parece ser o mais eficaz, com 54,9% dos casos controlados e Felimazole® o mais seguro, com 5,13% de reacções adversas. Comparando os custos das opções terapêuticas, a terapêutica médica requer um menor investimento inicial. A tiroidectomia parece ser a mais económica a longo prazo, correspondendo ao custo de um ano de terapêutica médica e a metade do preço de tratamento com iodo radioactivo.

Foi feito um estudo prospectivo dos 77 gatos hipertiroideos apresentados num período de 3 meses. A população foi caracterizada e foi determinada a frequência dos sinais clínicos, alterações hematológicas e bioquímicas, bem como os resultados obtidos com as terapêuticas médica e cirúrgica. As tiróides extirpadas foram submetidas a análise histopatológica. A média de idades da população foi de 14 anos. Foram diagnosticados 18 novos casos, o que corresponde a 6 novos casos por mês. Todos os casos apresentaram perda de peso. A frequência de ocorrência de diarreia, dispneia, sopros cardíacos, PU/PD, lesões cutâneas e vômitos foi acentuadamente mais baixa que a descrita na bibliografia, bem como a frequência de eritrocitose, elevação das enzimas hepáticas e hiperfosfatémia. A frequência de azotémicos foi superior à descrita na literatura e ocorreu azotémia *de novo* em 15,6% dos casos. Houve efeitos secundários à terapêutica em 23,38% dos casos. A doença concomitante mais frequente foi a patologia dentária e o meio de diagnóstico complementar mais utilizado foi a ecocardiografia. A única morte devida a uma complicação pós-cirúrgica ocorreu após uma tiroidectomia bilateral não faseada. Em 2 das 7 tiroidectomias não foi possível preservar o aporte sanguíneo da paratiroide. 3 das 7 glândulas analisadas apresentaram carcinomas.

Palavras-chave: Hipertiroidismo felino, tiroxina, carbimazol, metimazol, tiroidectomia, iodo radioactivo.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is constituted by one retrospective study and one prospective study of the hyperthyroid cat population of the Wylie Veterinary Centre.

The retrospective study was based on 266 hyperthyroid cats presented in the practice from 1/8/07 to 31/7/09, with the objective of characterizing the population and evaluating the efficacy and safety of the different therapeutic options. The therapeutic options were surgery and medical therapy with Neo-mercazole® (carbimazole), Felimazole® (methimazole), methimazole liquid and Vidalta® (sustained release carbimazole). Methimazole liquid was the most effective option, controlling 69,2% of the cases. Because it is no longer available, the most effective available option is the unilateral thyroidectomy, with 69% of controlled cases. Neo-mercazole® and methimazole liquid were the safest options, without causing adverse reactions. However, because they are no longer available, the safest option is probably the unilateral thyroidectomy, with only 4,8% of complications. Comparing the available medical options, Vidalta® seems to be the most effective, with 54,9% of controlled cases, and Felimazole® the safest, causing adverse reactions in 5,13% of the cases. Comparing the costs of the different treatment options, medical therapy requires a lower initial investment, but thyroidectomy seems to be the most economical long-term option, corresponding to a one-year course of medical treatment and to half the price of radioiodine therapy.

The prospective study involves the 77 hyperthyroid cats seen in a period of 3 months. The population was characterized, the frequency of the clinical signs, hematologic and biochemical changes was determined, as well as the outcome of medical and surgical therapy and the involvement of the parathyroid in surgery. The extracted thyroid glands and submitted to histopathology. The population had a mean of 14 years of age. 18 new cases were diagnosed, corresponding to 6 new hyperthyroid cats per month. All cats presented weight loss. The frequency of diarrhoea, dyspnoea, heart murmur, PU/PD, skin lesions and vomiting was much lower than described in literature, as well as the frequency of erythrocytosis, increased liver enzymes and hyperphosphatemia. Azotemia had a higher frequency than described in the literature and *de novo* azotemia happened after treatment in 15,6% of the cases. The incidence of side effects of treatment was 23,38%. The most frequent concomitant disease was dental disease and the most common diagnostic complementary exam was echocardiography. The only patient that died of a complication from surgery was submitted to a simultaneous bilateral surgery. In 2 of the 7 thyroidectomies the parathyroid's blood supply was not preserved. Thyroid carcinoma was found in 3 of the 7 analysed glands.

Keywords: Feline hyperthyroidism, thyroxine, carbimazole, methimazole, thyroidectomy, radioactive iodine.

GENERAL INDEX

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
RESUMO	II
ABSTRACT	III
GENERAL INDEX	IV
INDEX OF PICTURES	V
INDEX OF TABLES.....	VI
INDEX OF GRAPHICS.....	VII
INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS	VII
CLINICAL ACTIVITIES ASSISTED	1
I. CHARACTERIZATION OF FELINE HYPERTHYROIDISM.....	5
1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO FELINE HYPERTHYROIDISM	5
1.1 <i>Anatomy and Physiology</i>	5
1.2 <i>Aetiology and Pathogenesis</i>	7
1.3 <i>Histopathology</i>	9
1.4 <i>Prognosis</i>	12
2. CLINICAL PRESENTATION	13
2.1 <i>Palpable Goitre</i>	13
2.2 <i>Polyuria and Polydipsia (PU/PD):</i>	14
2.3 <i>Age</i>	15
2.4 <i>Breed</i>	15
2.5 <i>Obesity</i>	15
2.6 <i>Gastrointestinal Signs</i>	15
2.7 <i>Weight Loss</i>	16
2.8 <i>Dehydration</i>	16
2.9 <i>Cardiorespiratory Signs</i>	16
2.10 <i>Skin Changes</i>	18
2.11 <i>Mental/CNS Changes</i>	19
2.12 <i>Apathetic Syndrome</i>	19
2.13 <i>Systemic Hyperthension</i>	19
3. DIAGNOSIS	21
3.1 <i>Haematologic Changes</i>	21
3.2 <i>Blood Chemistry</i>	22
3.3 <i>Thyroid Ultrasonography</i>	27
3.4 <i>Echocardiographic Abnormalities</i>	27
3.5 <i>Thoracic Radiography</i>	28
3.6 <i>Systolic Blood Pressure</i>	28
3.7 <i>Electrocardiography</i>	29
4 CLINICAL MANAGEMENT.....	30
4.1 <i>Medical Treatment</i>	32
4.2 <i>Surgical Treatment</i>	40
4.3. <i>Radioactive Iodine Therapy</i>	52
4.4 <i>Other Treatment Methods</i>	57
5. EFFECTS OF TREATMENT IN RENAL FUNCTION:.....	58
II. CLINICAL INVESTIGATION	60
1. GENERAL MATERIAL AND METHODS.....	60
2. RETROSPECTIVE STUDY OF ALL HYPERHTYROID CATS SEEN IN CLINIC FROM 1/8/07 TO 31/7/09.....	64
2.1 <i>Material and Methods</i>	64
2.2 <i>Results</i>	65
2.3 <i>Discussion and Conclusions:</i>	70
3. PROSPECTIVE STUDY OF ALL HYPERTHYROID CATS SEEN FROM 20TH OF SEPTEMBER OF 2009 TO THE 20TH OF DECEMBER OF 2009.....	72
3.1 <i>Material and Methods</i>	72
3.3. <i>Discussion and conclusions</i>	85

4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS	91
III. REFERENCES	94
IV. ANNEXES	99
ANNEX 1: CLINICAL SIGNS OBSERVED IN HYPERHTYROID CATS.	99
ANNEX 2: GOITRE PALPATION TECHNIQUES.	103
ANNEX 3: CONCURRENT DISEASES OBSERVED, EXAMS OR PROCEDURES DONE AND TREATMENTS THAT THE HYPERTHYROID PATIENTS WERE SUBMITTED TO UNTIL THE END OF THE PERIOD OF STUDY.	104
ANNEX 4: LABORATORY ABNORMALITIES IN HYPERTHYROID CATS.	107
ANNEX 5: MEDICAL TREATMENT: METHIMAZOLE PROTOCOL	108
ANNEX 6: PHYSICAL STATUS SCALE AND EVALUATION OF ANAESTHETIC RISK.	109
ANNEX 7: ANAESTHESIA OF GERIATRIC PATIENTS:	110
ANNEX 8: RADIOACTIVE IODINE THERAPY	111
ANNEX 9: ADVERSE REACTIONS TO METHIMAZOLE:	124
ANNEX 10: DATA SHEETS OF THE DRUGS USED IN MEDICAL THERAPY	125

INDEX OF PICTURES

Picture 1, 2 and 3: Material and instruments used for T ₄ determinations. Heparine tube, VetScanner®.....	24
Picture 4 and 5: Thyroid ultrasonography, technique and image of a hyperthyroid cat and an oversized gland.....	27
Picture 6: Ultrasound doppler blood pressure determinations in the tail.....	28
Picture 7 and 8: Ultrasound doppler blood pressure determination in thoracic limb.....	28
Picture 9, 10, 11 and 12: Tricotomy, positioning, anaesthesia and preparation for thyroidectomy.....	43
Picture 13 and 14: Anatomy of the thyroid and parathyroid glands – Structures associated with the thyroid, parathyroid gland.....	44
Picture 15 and 16: Anatomy of the thyroid and parathyroid glands – Vascular supply of the thyroid and parathyroid gland, isolation of blood vessel.....	45
Picture 17, 18 and 19: Thyroidectomy – skin and muscle incisions, debriding, retraction and separating the paratracheal fascia surrounding the thyroid gland.....	46
Picture 20: Isolating the parathyroid.....	47
Picture 21 and 22: Separating the parathyroid from the thyroid gland.....	48
Picture 23 and 24: Post-surgical care – dressing, monitoring and recovery in incubator.....	50
Picture 25: Geiger-Muller instrument.....	53
Picture 26 and 27: Personal safety measures and radioactivity measurement.....	54
Picture 28: Storage of contaminated materials.....	54
Picture 29: Isolation – Radioactive iodine unit.....	54
Picture 30 and 31: Manipulating, dosing and subcutaneous injection of ¹³¹ I in a hyperthyroid cat.....	55
Picture 32: Case number 409/10 - Follicular cystic thyroid adenoma.....	81
Picture 33: Case number 410/10 - Bilateral solid and follicular thyroid carcinoma.....	82
Picture 34: Case number 411/10 - In the same thyroid gland: follicular adenoma and follicular carcinoma.....	82
Picture 35: Case number 412/10 - In the same thyroid gland: solid follicular carcinoma and follicular and cystic adenoma.....	83
Picture 36: 413/10 - Follicular and cystic adenoma.....	83
Picture 37: Case number 414/10 – Multiple follicular adenomas, some of them cystic.....	84
Picture 38: Classical Palpation Technique.....	103

INDEX OF TABLES

Table 1: Differential Diagnosis for hyperthyroidism in Cats.....	21
Table 2: Linear measurements (mm) and volumetric estimations (mm ³) for left and right thyroid lobes of control and hyperthyroid cats.....	27
Table 3: Advantages and disadvantages of major therapies for feline hyperthyroidism.....	30
Table 4: Summary of characteristics of the treatments for feline hyperthyroidism.....	31
Table 5: Drugs useful in the medical management of hyperthyroidism.....	33
Table 6: Adverse reactions associated with drugs used therapeutically in Feline Hyperthyroidism.....	38
Table 7: Rate of postoperative clinical hypocalcemia and recurrence of hyperthyroidism after different surgical techniques for thyroidectomy.....	49
Table 8: Incidence of hypocalcemia after bilateral thyroidectomy.....	51
Table 9: Mean and Standard deviation of the age, age at diagnosis and time since diagnosis of the population.....	74
Table 10: Mean and standard deviation of the initial and minimum weight and of weight variation.....	76
Table 11: Laboratory findings.....	76
Table 12: Frequency of use of each drug in the treatment of hyperthyroidism.....	76
Table 13: Frequency of controlling doses of each drug.....	77
Table 14: Controlled cases.....	77
Table 15: Mean and standard deviation of the dose of each drug necessary to obtain control.....	78
Table 16: Analysis of the different treatment protocols.....	78
Table 17: Analysis of Feliazole® and Vidalta® treatment results.....	79
Table 18: Mean and standard deviation of variation of blood urea and creatinine levels with treatment.....	79
Table 19: Frequency of De Novo azotemia, elevated urea and elevated creatinine after treatment.....	79
Table 20: Linear measurements (mm) for the thyroid lobes of hyperthyroid cats submitted to thyroidectomy.....	84
Table 21: Comparison between the abnormalities in laboratory tests found in literature with those observed in this study.....	86
Table 22: Comparison of clinical signs of adverse reaction to methimazole and cabimazole.....	87
Table 23: Comparison of the linear measurements (mm) for the thyroid lobes of control, hyperthyroid cats and hyperthyroid cats submitted to thyroidectomy.....	89
Annexes:	
Table 24: Frequency of clinical signs found in this study.....	99
Table 25: Clinical findings in 131 cats (1983 Survey) compared with 202 Cats (1993 Survey).....	100
Table 26: Owner observations (Historical Signs) of cats with hyperthyroidism.....	101
Table 27: Physical examination findings associated with hyperthyroidism in cats.....	101
Table 28: History and clinical findings in 126 hyperthyroid cats.....	102
Table 29: Frequency of other diseases or health problems observed in the patients until the end of the period.....	104
Table 30: Frequency of exams or procedures that the patients were submitted to until the end of the period.....	105
Table 31: Frequency of the treatments that the patients were submitted to until the end of the period.....	106
Table 32: Laboratory abnormalities on routine testing of hyperthyroid cats.....	107

Table 33: American Society of Anesthesiologist physical status scale. The systemic disease may or may not be the condition from which the patient is undergoing anaesthesia. Emergency cases are classified as category IV and V and are marked by the addition of an “E” to the number.....	109
Table 34: Abnormalities associated with methimazole therapy in 262 cats with hyperthyroidism.....	124

INDEX OF GRAPHICS

Graph 1: Number of cats over 12 years of age seen between 1.8.07 – 31.7.09.....	65
Graph 2: Prevalence in each age group.....	65
Graph 3: Sex distribution of the population.....	65
Graph 4: Prevalence in each sex group.....	65
Graph 5: Breed distribution.....	65
Graph 6: Breed distribution: DSH and other breeds.....	65
Graph 7: Age distribution of cats treated with Felimazole®.....	66
Graph 8: Reasons for changing to another treatment protocol.....	66
Graph 9: Age distribution of cats treated with Vidalta®.....	67
Graph 10: Reason for changing to another treatment protocol.....	67
Graph 11: Age distribution of cats treated with methimazole liquid	67
Graph 12: Reasons for changing to another treatment protocol.....	67
Graph 13: Age distribution of cats submitted to thyroidectomy.....	68
Graph 14: Involvement of the parathyroid in the surgery.....	68
Graph 15: Reasons for doing the surgery.....	68
Graph 16: Type of complication.....	68
Graph 17: Overview of clinical management.....	69
Graph 18: Efficacy of treatment.....	69
Graph 19: Adverse reactions / Complications.....	69
Graph 20: Costs of treatment options.....	69
Graph 21: Sex distribution.....	73
Graph 22: Breed distribution (%).	73
Graph 23: Colour distribution (%).	73
Graph 24: Age distribution.....	74
Graph 25: Palpable goitre.....	75
Graph 26: Time until control (days) (n=42).....	77
Graph 27: Involvement of the parathyroid gland.....	80

INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

%: Percentage
¹³¹ I: Iodine-131, radioiodine
¹²³ I: Iodine-123
α: Alfa
β: Beta
γ: Gama
μCi: microcurie
ACEI: angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors
ALP: Alkanine Phosphatase
ALT: Alanine Aminotransferase
AMP: Adenosine monophosphate
AMY: Amylase

ATP: Adenosine triphosphate
AST: Aspartate Aminotransferase
ASA: American Society of Anaesthesiologists
BID: twice daily
BUN: Blood Urinary Nitrogen
cAMP: Cyclic adenosine monophosphate
CBC: Complete Blood Cell
CHF: Congestive Heart FAilure
CKD: Chronic Kidney disease
CO: Carbone Monoxide
CRF: Chronic Renal Failure
CT: Computed Tomography
cTnI: Cardiac Troponine I
dL: decilitre
DLH: Domestic long Hair
DSH: Domestic Short Hair
ECG: Electrocardiogram
FNA: Fine needle aspiration
FT₄: Free Thyroxine
g: gram
GFR: Glomerular Filtration Rate
Gi: Inhibitory G
GI: Gastrointestinal
GLOB: Globulins
Graph: Graphic
Gs: Stimulatory G
Gy: Gray
h: Hour
HCM: Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy
K⁺: Potassium
Kg: kilogram
KI: Potassium iodine
KIO₃: Potassium iodate
L: Liter
LDH: Lactate Dehydrogenase
L-throxine: Levothyroxine
mCi: millicurie
MCV: Mean Corpuscular Volume
mg: milligram
mm: millimeters
mm³: cubic millimeter
mmHG: millimeters of mercury
mR: milliroentgen
Na⁺: Sodium
NEFAS: (4aR,9aS)-N-ethyl-4,4a,9,9a-tetrahydro-1H-fluoren-4a-amine
ng: Nanogram
Nmol: Nanomol
NSAID: Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug
OID: Once daily
PCB: Polychlorinated biphenyls
PCV: Packed Cell Volume
PD: Polydipsia

PLO: pleurolecithin organogel
PLT: platelets
PTH: Parathyroid Hormone
PU: Polyuria
rad: largely obsolete unit of absorbed radiation dose
RBC: Red Blood Cells
rT₃: reverse Triiodothyronine
RVC: Royal Veterinary College
T₂: Diiodothyronine
T₃: Triiodothyronine
T₄: Thyroxine
TBIL: Total bilirubin
TID: thrice-daily
TNG: Toxic Nodular Goitre
TSH: Thyroid Stimulating Hormone
TRH: Thyrotropin Releasing Hormone
TT₃: Total Triiodothyronine
TT₄: Total Thyroxine
SAP: serum alkaline phosphatase
UK: United Kingdom
WBC: white blood cells