

CARE FOR PATIENTS WITH BRAIN TUMORS

by Dr. Carrie Journey DVM, DACVIM (Neurology)

SUMMARY:

- 1) Alert your veterinarian if any new symptoms arise.
- 2) Give medications as directed
- 3) If more than 2 seizures in 24 hours, a seizure longer than 5 minutes, unable to rise or unable to wake up seek emergency veterinary care.

EXPLANATION:

Your pet has been diagnosed with a brain tumor. Diagnostics such as CT, MRI and spinal tap can tell us many characteristics of a tumor, but without a biopsy it is hard to be 100% certain of what type of tumor this is. Very occasionally a mass that we were quite confident was a tumor on imaging will turn out to be something else, like an infection, on biopsy.

The exact treatments recommended depend on the location and size of the tumor. However, in general most tumors are treated with either surgery, radiation, chemotherapy or a combination of the above. The goal of these treatments is to shrink the tumor and slow growth. 100% cure is difficult and is rarely achieved. Rather the goal of these treatments is to give your pet a better quality of life for longer. Some families choose not to pursue treatment. These pets are treated with medications aimed solely at controlling symptoms and are considered to be in hospice care.

During the course of the treatment it is very important to monitor for side effects of medications as well as changes in your pet's symptoms. Please contact the hospital if you have any concerns.

SYMPTOMS OF BRAIN DISEASE

Please contact your veterinarian if your pet develops new symptoms or if existing symptoms seem to be getting worse. Symptoms include:

- 1) Seizures
- 2) Change in personality
- 3) Difficulty staying awake
- 4) Difficulty sleeping
- 5) Difficulty walking
- 6) Dizziness
- 7) Circling
- 8) Blindness
- 9) Difficulty eating, drinking or swallowing

MONITORING:

Regular monthly checkups are important to keep your veterinarian in the loop on how your pet is doing. During these appointments your pet will be examined to look for new symptoms, and you will discuss any adjustments to medications. Your veterinarian also may want to perform blood work and urinalysis to monitor for side effects of medications.



Journey Veterinary Neurology

©2015 Journey Veterinary Neurology, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0