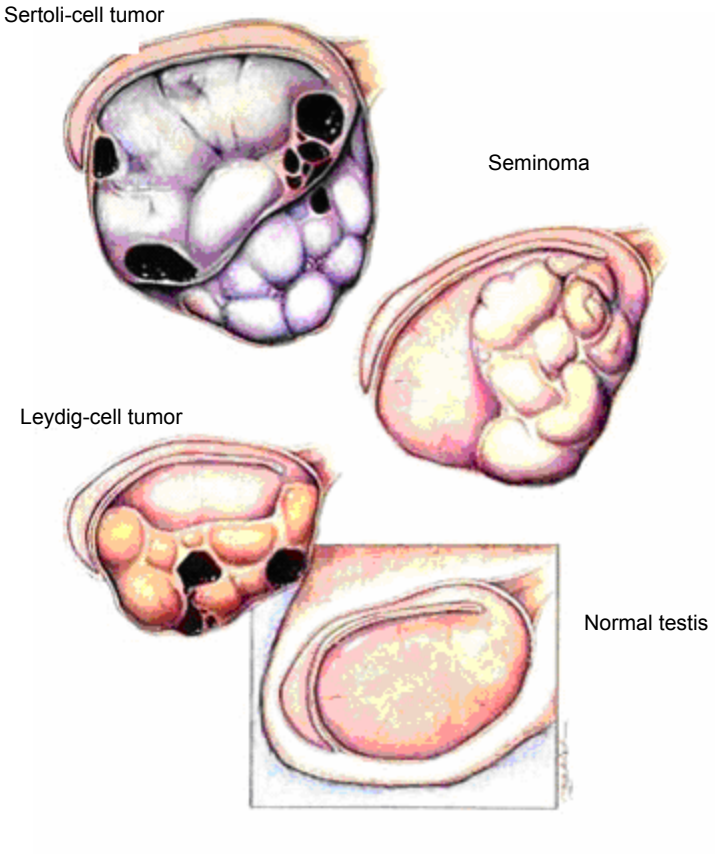
Client Information Series

Testicular Tumors



Testicular Tumors

Diagnostic Plan
History
Physical examination
Testicular palpation
X-rays of abdomen
Biopsy

Therapeutic Plan
Surgery
Chemotherapy

Nutritional Plan
Postsurgically, nutrition adequate for tissue repair
Consider body condition; feed a food appropriate to maintain ideal body weight.

Testicular Tumors

Your pet has a testicular tumor. Tumors of the testicles are the second most common tumor in male dogs; testicular tumors are rare in cats. Castration is usually the treatment of choice for these tumors. This client education sheet will help you learn more about testicular tumors and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

What You Should Know About Testicular Tumors

Testicular tumors are fairly common in older male dogs that have not been neutered. Veterinary pathologists recognize three tumor types: Sertoli cell tumors, seminomas, and interstitial cell (Leydig cell) tumors. These tumors occur with about equal frequency. The average age of affected dogs is about 10 years.

Males with testicles that have not descended into the scrotum are 10 to 15 times more likely to have Sertoli cell tumors or seminomas than are normal males. Of the three tumor types, Sertoli cell tumors are the most dangerous because they have the greatest potential to spread to other organs and because up to 50% of these tumors produce estrogen in increased amounts. Estrogen causes the male dog's breasts to enlarge and the sheath surrounding the penis to droop. The dog's prostate gland may enlarge, causing constipation and blood in the urine. Other signs of excessive estrogen production in male dogs include hair loss on the abdomen, chest, and inner and outer thighs; lethargy; and anemia.

Testicular tumors are rare in cats. They are rare, in part, because many male cats are castrated at an early age.

Causes

Specific causes of testicular tumors are unknown; however, undescended testicles and advanced age are risk factors.

Diagnosis

Many testicular tumors can be felt by your veterinarian when he or she performs a physical examination on your pet. Other clues include hair loss, increased pigment (black) in your pet's skin, breast enlargement, and prostate gland enlargement. Anemia is diagnosed by blood tests.

X-rays of the chest and abdomen may help diagnose spread of the tumor. Tissues may be biopsied to confirm the diagnosis or to detect spread of the tumor to lymph nodes and other organs.

Treatment and Home Care

Castration is the treatment of choice for all testicular tumors, whether the testicles are in the scrotum or the abdomen. Radiation and chemotherapy may benefit some dogs whose testicular tumors have spread.

Many of the signs of estrogen production disappear after castration, but this may take several months. The anemia that occurs with estrogen-producing testicular tumors may need to be treated with blood transfusions if it is severe.

Home care for dogs with testicular tumors most commonly includes checking the surgical incision for swelling, redness, and drainage. If these occur, your should call your veterinarian. You should also call if your pet chews the incision. Restrict your pet's exercise according to your veterinarian's instructions. If sutures are present, they may need to be removed according to the schedule provided by your veterinarian.

Dietary Plan

After treating your pet for a testicular tumor, your veterinarian may recommend a dietary change. Optimal nutrition for older pets provides for the pet's needs, but more importantly, it reduces the health risks associated with feeding excess sodium, phosphorus, protein, and calories. Foods that avoid these harmful excesses and provide proper nutrition for dogs include Hill's® Science Diet® Adult for dogs one to six years of age and Hill's® Science Diet® Senior for dogs seven years and older.

Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). However, do not add water to your cat's food. Feed only the recommended food. Do not feed additional salt or any snacks that may contain sodium. Be patient but firm with your pet. This is important because the success or failure of treatment depends to a large degree on strict adherence to the new food.

Presented as an educational service by

Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: _____

Patient's Name: _____

Medication(s): _____

Nutritional Recommendation: _____

Follow-Up Appointment: _____ (Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.