



NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF ONCOLOGY

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Feline Lymphoma (LSA)

Feline LSA is the second most common feline cancer. It is one of the most treatable cancers, having excellent responses to therapy with variable survival times. This month I have compiled some information and facts about feline LSA:



- The average age of onset is 11 years.
- FeLV infection is a known risk factor for the development of LSA.
- The “Hit and Run” Theory suggests that many LSA cases are the result of a previous FeLV infection that has been cleared, but which genetically turned “on” the oncogene responsible for the development of LSA.
- Most young cats that develop LSA are FeLV infected at time of diagnosis.
- FeLV infection is most highly associated with the mediastinal form of lymphoma (Siamese and Oriental breeds at higher risk).
- Other forms of LSA tend to be FeLV negative.
- FIV infection can modestly increase risk of LSA, likely due to decreased immune surveillance.
- Chronic inflammation appears to be a risk factor for the development of LSA. This accounts for the documented risk of IBD malignantly transforming into GI LSA and demonstrates the importance of managing IBD well.
- Most feline LSA is B-cell, the mediastinal form is usually T-cell.
- The most common site for GI LSA is the small intestine followed by stomach and then ileoceocolic junction/colon.
- GI biopsy is needed for diagnosis. Full thickness biopsies, via surgery, are recommended. Endoscopic biopsies of the intestine offer little reliable diagnostic value.
- FNA of mesenteric lymph nodes has no diagnostic value, as IBD will cause identical cytological changes, again biopsy is required.
- Peripheral lymphadenopathy is rarely a feature of LSA and other causes should be investigated (ie. lymph node hyperplasia syndrome).
- In cats, LSA is described by location, location is extremely prognostic
 - Mediastinal: usually FeLV (+)ve. Survival with chemo: 2-3 months.
 - Renal: 25% FeLV (+)ve. 50% will spread to CNS. Survival with chemo: 3-6 months.
 - GI: Survival with chemo: 7-10 months.
 - Nasal: Survival with chemo or chemo/radiation: 1-1.5 years.
- Multi-agent chemotherapy protocols offer the highest response rates and the longest survival times.
- Substitution of drugs that can cross the blood brain barrier into the treatment protocol appears to decrease the metastatic rate of renal LSA to the CNS.
- Doxorubicin, a drug commonly included in treatment protocols, can cause renal insufficiency and care must be exercised when using this drug so as to avoid this side effect.
- Response rates with treatment vary between 50-70%.
- Cats are very resistant to most of the side effects of chemotherapy.
- A good response to therapy is a major positive prognostic indicator.

DR. KEVIN FINORA IS A BOARD CERTIFIED ONCOLOGIST AND SMALL ANIMAL INTERNIST. HE SEES PATIENTS WEDNESDAY (INCLUDING EVENINGS) TO SATURDAY AT VEC/RC SOUTH. PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT DR. FINORA IF YOU HAVE ANY CANCER RELATED QUESTIONS.

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