

SHOCK WAVE THERAPY

A NON-INVASIVE TREATMENT FOR ARTHRITIS IN DOGS



THE QUEEN'S
VETERINARY
SCHOOL HOSPITAL

INTRODUCTION

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy (ESWT) uses pressure waves to deliver energy deep into the body and is used to treat a wide range of musculoskeletal conditions. Using sophisticated equipment, pressure waves of the appropriate energy can be generated and then delivered to a specific target area. Our main focus with this technology is the treatment of animals that have longstanding joint pain caused by arthritis.

Making use of the state-of-the-art facilities at the Surgical Discovery Centre, we are researching the effects of ESWT in small animals.

ESWT can be applied by Focused therapy (using piezo ceramic crystals to generate the pressure wave, ideal for joint problems) or Radial therapy (using pneumatics, ideal for soft tissue related treatment).

Shock waves stimulate the body's own healing response, either by mechanically breaking down calcium deposits, diminishing pain by affecting nerves in the area, or by their anti-inflammatory effect.

WHAT TO EXPECT

A course of shockwave treatment requires weekly treatments for 6 weeks. Each treatment typically takes between 30 and 60 minutes. Patients can be admitted in the morning and treated on an outpatient basis. Depending on the caseload, it may be possible to wait while your animal is treated, or otherwise you may need to pick your dog up a later in the day.

A review appointment is required 4 weeks after the course of treatment has been completed.

ESWT is not invasive and does not usually require us to shave your animal's fur. We use a conductive gel that helps the waves to be transferred from the probe to the skin, and this gel is simply wiped away after treatment.

Most animals tolerate this therapy very well, lying quietly while they are treated. A small number may find the first treatment a little uncomfortable and light sedation may be required, so we ask that all animals are starved before their first appointment in case this is necessary.

Immediately after treatment your dog will have a short period of gentle walking on a slow treadmill to mobilise the joint and ease any stiffness after treatment.

There are no special considerations after treatment, and we recommend that you continue to give any medications as usual. It is a good idea to have veterinary prescribed anti-inflammatory drugs for your dog to have at home in case they are needed. We can provide these if needed.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS

In order to help measure the effects of treatment we will ask you to complete a short questionnaire before and after treatment. We will use a special pressure-sensitive mat ("Tekscan") to measure the load that your pet puts through his/her feet while walking. This provides us with an objective measurement of lameness. This test will be performed before and after the course of treatment so that we can measure even subtle changes.

We may take videos and photos to be used in the analysis, and also to support the work of the Queen's Veterinary School Hospital and the Surgical Discovery Centre in publications, to promote the services, and for education purposes.

Further information can be obtained from Amy Stelman RVN (Clinical Research Coordinator) who can be contacted via the small animal hospital reception 01223 337621 or via email as2175@cam.ac.uk