



Use cases from the clinic and field

Cage side monitoring for a critical / compromised patient

Background

Erica Whitcher is a Licensed Veterinary Technologist (LVT) at an exclusively small animal hospital in New Hampshire. She has been in the veterinary field for 25 years. She is a practice manager with many responsibilities including: Patient care, client education, inventory control, office management, surgical assisting, laboratory testing and anesthetic monitoring.

Clinical Story

Suzie, a five-year-old spayed female large breed canine was presented after hours for unexplained collapse. Suzie is an active dog with no history of collapse or other illness. She is up to date on vaccines and had a negative heartworm test in May 2018. Physical exam revealed pale pink mucous membranes with a slightly prolonged capillary refill time; body temp of 102.2 °F; normal hydration; neurological exam within normal limits. Suzie's owners report normal appetite and eliminations. No history of getting into trash or toxins. Suzie was admitted for a complete workup including; CBC, blood chemistry profile, complete urinalysis, ECG, proBNP, blood glucose and chest radiographs. Suzie was connected to the VetCorder as soon as she was taken into the hospital and lab samples were obtained. The VetCorder indicated Suzie was having periods of VPCs (3-4 per minute) and was in heart block with skipped beats every 5-8 beats. The chest radiographs revealed a rounded enlarged heart. The CBC, proBNP, blood chemistry profile, urinalysis and blood glucose results were all within normal limits.

Suzie was monitored with the VetCorder during the initial treatment of VPCs and heart block and throughout the next 24 hours. Atropine was given for initial treatment of the heart block. After several hours the VPCs decreased to 1-2 every 5 minutes and eventually disappeared. The heart block was more difficult to get under control. After 72 hours of treatment with Atropine, Pimobendan, taurine, magnesium citrate, CoQ10, and complete cage rest the heart block was mostly under control. If Suzie became agitated or taken for a longer walk than out to the bathroom and right back to the cage the heart block returned.

Results

Suzie was sent home with strict activity restriction and several medications to keep the heart block under control.

At our hospital we have a monitor in the dentistry area and in our surgical suite. Until I was introduced to the VetCorder, we did not have a monitoring device to be used cage side. The VetCorder has increased the level of care that we are able to offer our patients. It has been a great device for cage side monitoring of critical patients.

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