

***Pneumonyssus caninum* (Nasal mite) in Four Golden Retrievers**

P*pneumonyssus caninum* has been identified in four Golden Retrievers over the past six years. Two of these cases were diagnosed incidental to anesthesia for surgical procedures. The mites were seen crawling on the nasal epithelium around the external nares. They are small, very active cream-colored mites. I suspect the mites were making an exodus due to the presence of anesthetic gases because the endotracheal tube cuff was not adequately inflated. Two of the cases were identified when owners were able to submit mites adherent to the sticky surface of a piece of transparent tape.

Only one dog had signs referable to the mite infestation. The signs were those nasal irritations (sneezing, snuffling and snorting). A search of the literature yielded no information on the treatment of this mite. The owner of the affected dog agreed to our use of ivermectin (an extra-label application) in the treatment of this disease. A single injection of ivermectin at a dosage of 200 µg/kg was administered subcutaneously. The clinical signs subsided within three days and have not recurred in the year since treatment.

R. W. (Bob) Brandt, St. Vital Veterinary Hospital, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 0A4

Abstracts from Current Publications

Treatment of Immune-mediated Diseases with Azathioprine

This article reviews the clinical and pharmacological features of azathioprine. The discussion includes the chemical composition, drug distribution, mechanism of action, adverse reactions, side effects and clinical applications of azathioprine. Azathioprine has been used in dogs for the treatment of idiopathic, noninfectious, nonerosive arthritis, and erosive polyarthritis. Azathioprine is most commonly used in combination with glucocorticoids for the treatment of immune-mediated skin diseases in companion animals. On its own, azathioprine is not a suitable chemotherapeutic agent for the initial therapy of immune-mediated dermatoses, as there is a 3-5 week lag period before its effects are evident.

Azathioprine has been used to treat cats with severe idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease previously resistant to prednisone and metronidazole therapy.

(The reviewer suggests that anyone interested in using this drug carefully peruse the source article for dose and side effects.)

Susan Ford

Beale KM. Azathioprine for treatment of immune-mediated diseases of dogs and cats. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 1988; 192: 1316-1318.

Weaner Pig Diet for Past Growth

In order to promote the fastest growth possible in weaner pigs one must deal with increased stress levels at weaning. Temperature, environment, and feed changes that occur and low immunity levels, all combine to decrease appetite and increase the risk of scours and other diseases.

To minimize the effect of these factors on growth rate, provide a highly digestible, dense ration, ad-lib, at weaning. This ration must contain milk products, no raw starches (must be cooked), and only soft fats to avoid gastrointestinal damage and its effects. Feed this ration prior to weaning to stimulate the digestive tract and phase out to a regular starter 10-14 days after weaning. Foster those piglets not ready for weaning back onto another sow to be weaned later. When weaned, group piglets according to weights. Provide extra care and attention to less thrifty piglets. Water should be provided ad-lib and adequate environmental temperature, feeder space, and pen space must also be provided.

E.D. Doornenbal

Toplis P. Weaner Management Goal — Fast Growth. *International Pigletter* 1988; 7(12): 45-47.

Stillbirths in Pigs

We pay more attention to live-born pigs and preweaning mortality than we do to stillbirths. Since most stillbirths occur during parturition, they can be reduced by careful farrowing management. A suggested target is 5-6%. True stillbirths are decomposing or mummified. Others die of anoxia during farrowing. Apparent high stillbirth rates are seen when piglets die shortly after birth. These can be identified because their lungs float when placed in water. With supervision these otherwise weak, chilled pigs, can be warmed, helped to nurse or fed colostrum. If true stillbirths are above target, check sow records and identify which sows produce stillbirths. In the herd discussed, 11% of sows produced 55% of all stillbirths. Stillbirths increase with parity, with large litters and in sows that have had previous stillbirths. A chart rating various risk factors is given. High risk sows may be induced and all of their farrowings should be supervised. Manual assistance and oxytocin are used as necessary. Adequate creep areas, extra heat lamps at the back of the crate, and sow comfort are essential. With these methods, the herd discussed cut its stillbirth rate in half. Other contributing factors in stillbirths can be low sow