

# Neoplasms in Domestic Animals: A Review of Experimental and Spontaneous Carcinogenesis

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Received March 12, 1981

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Clues to environmental and host factors in human oncogenesis are derived from clinical or epidemiologic studies; additional evidence is provided by animal experimentation. Induced tumors in animals are useful because of their reproducibility and predictability, allowing detailed study of specific carcinogens or carcinogenic influences. Spontaneously or naturally occurring tumors in domestic animals are of particular interest for comparative studies—these tumors occur in heterogenous outbred populations of animals closely sharing man's environment; their cause is generally unknown; many tumors occur in numbers suitable for detailed investigations; and tumors generally occur in aged animals, thus facilitating study of chronic processes associated with carcinogenesis in nature.

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Observations of spontaneous and induced tumors in animals have been useful for determining mechanisms of carcinogenesis. Although the ultimate proof of the importance of an animal model for cancer requires parallelism to a human disease, it must be remembered that it is not yet possible to define precisely those changes that occur in normal cells that allow them to become neoplastic; it would seem, therefore, that all models that are definable and reproducible are worthy of study whether or not there exists an immediately evident counterpart in the human disease spectrum [1].

The purpose of this paper is to review the causes for neoplastic disease in common domesticated animals. Included are those neoplasms that occur "spontaneously" in numbers suitable for additional investigation, and for which some risk factors have been identified which may provide clues as to etiology. Also included are "induced" tumors, those requiring a recognized and defined carcinogen—systems useful because of their predictability. No claim is made as to the importance of these animal models for study of human cancer, but each model is indeed a biological enigma in itself. The models are categorized by body system.

## *Skin*

Neoplasms of the skin and subcutaneous tissues are the most frequently recognized neoplastic disorders in domestic animals [2]. Some of the known causes of skin cancer in man are operative in animals. Prolonged and continuous exposure to sunlight is the best known etiologic factor, and a sunlight-induced-skin cancer (carcinoma) relationship has been established in several domestic species. The

sunlight-associated neoplasms in animals include squamous cell carcinoma of the pinnae and external nares in white cats [3], squamous cell carcinoma of the eye and periocular structures in white-faced cattle, notably of Hereford breed [4], carcinoma of the vulva in sheep and Ayrshire cattle [5], carcinoma of the perineum in goats [6], carcinoma of the ear and other areas poorly covered by wool in sheep [7], carcinoma of the non-pigmented glabrous skin of the ventral abdomen in dogs [8], and possibly horn carcinoma in Indian Zebu cattle [9].

A viral cause for some skin tumors is recognized in domestic animals. Species-specific infectious DNA viruses belonging to the family papovaviridae cause benign papillomas of the skin and mucous membranes in most animals. The progression of viral-induced warts to squamous cell carcinoma has been described most convincingly in rabbits [10], and evidence suggests that squamous cell carcinoma can be a sequel to papillomatosis in goats, cattle, and dogs [11–13].

Other viral-induced neoplasms of the skin and subcutaneous tissues in domestic animals include poxvirus-induced myxomas and fibromas in rabbits [14], papovavirus-induced fibromas in deer, and oncornavirus-induced sarcomas of poultry and cats [15].

Analysis of risk for skin cancer in a specific species or breed may provide insight into etiologic mechanisms. Heavily pigmented (black) dogs such as Scottish terriers are at excess risk for melanoma, but the factor(s) responsible for the increased risk is not known [16]. Similarly, Arabian horses are at excess risk for melanoma; the risk factor is not due to an inborn genetic factor, but probably due to pigment changes that take place as part of the aging process for that breed [17]. Melanosis and melanomas are sometimes recognized in young and newborn pigs, particularly Duroc-Jersey and Sinclair Miniature breeds, suggesting a congenital influence [18–20]. Cats are at low risk for melanoma of any site, but a strain of feline sarcoma virus has been isolated that induces melanomas in inoculated newborn kittens [21].

Boxer and Boston terrier dogs are at increased risk for mast cell tumors. The risk factor is unknown, but both breeds are related ancestrally to the English bulldog and English bull terrier [22]. The Kerry blue terrier is at excess risk for several benign tumors of the skin, most notably papillomas and sebaceous adenomas [16].

### *Blood and Blood-Forming Organs*

Exposure to certain chemicals or ionizing radiation, and complex hereditary factors have been implicated as etiologic factors in the initiation of leukemia-lymphoma in man. The factors contributing to the development of most cases of human leukemia, however, are still unknown.

Studies in animal leukemia clearly implicate viruses in etiopathogenesis: RNA tumor viruses have been frequently isolated from or associated with the leukemic cells of animals as diverse as fish, snakes, birds, rodents, cats, cattle, and non-human primates [23]. One of the best studied of the natural animal neoplasms is feline leukemia, which has been demonstrated convincingly to be caused by the horizontal infection with feline leukemia virus [24,25]. The disease can be induced by virus inoculation and can be prevented by immunization [26]. Another well-studied natural animal neoplasm caused by a retrovirus is bovine leukemia. The disease is contagious. It spreads within a herd of cattle through milk, contacts, and saliva, and from herd to herd mainly by commercial exchanges. It is induced by bovine leukemia virus, a retrovirus exogenous to the bovine species, and the disease can be transmitted by the virus to cattle or sheep [27].

DNA viruses are also found among those causing leukemia-lymphoma in domestic

animals; best studied is Marek's disease, a form of leukemia in poultry involving peripheral nerve tissue, caused by virus of the herpes group [28].

In addition to viruses, hereditary factors appear to influence the risk for certain leukemias in domestic animals. For example, the boxer breed of dog has an increased risk for lymphosarcoma [29]; genetic factors influence the susceptibility of cattle to bovine leukemia virus infection [30]; and a hereditary form of lymphosarcoma controlled by an autosomal recessive gene has been described in a breeding herd of large white pigs in Great Britain [31].

With the exception of the cat, myelogenous leukemias are rarely diagnosed in any domestic animal species. Induction of myelogenous leukemia in animals by ionizing radiation is well established, however, most notably in swine and dogs receiving  $^{90}\text{Sr}$  exposure [32,33]. These well-established experimental systems now provide useful models for study of the sequential marrow cellular and structural changes associated with leukemogenesis.

### *Alimentary*

With the possible exception of oral neoplasms in dogs, tumors of the alimentary tract in animals occur less frequently than those in humans. Comparison of etiologic factors associated with neoplasms of the alimentary tract in animals and man is difficult because many of the ethnic, social, and environmental factors that influence risk for digestive tract neoplasms in humans are not operative in animals.

The cause for most oral-pharyngeal tumors in domestic animals is unknown. In cattle, carcinoma of the pharynx and upper alimentary tract has been reported from regions of the world where bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) grows plentifully. It is suspected that environmental carcinogens may influence the transformation of viral papillomas to carcinomas [13]. For dogs, a significant urban association has been reported for tonsillar carcinoma, suggesting that environmental carcinogens might be implicated in etiopathogenesis [34]. The simultaneous occurrence of squamous cell carcinomas of the esophagus of humans and chickens living in certain northern provinces of China has been described; food processing perhaps leading to nitrosamine formation or their precursors has been implicated as contributing to high cancer incidence [35].

Intrinsic (host) factors influence risk for oral-pharyngeal neoplasms in the dog. For squamous cell carcinoma, melanoma, and fibrosarcoma, breeds with high risk include German short-haired pointers, weimeraners, golden retrievers, boxers, and cocker spaniels, whereas breeds with low risk are beagles and dachshunds. For melanoma and fibrosarcoma, males have higher risk than females [36]. The causes(s) for breed and sex predilections has not been determined.

An unusual neoplasm develops in the esophagus of dogs in regions of the world where *Spirocerca lupi*, the esophageal worm, is enzootic. A reactive granuloma develops around the parasite, and neoplastic transformation of the inflammatory tissue occurs in some cases forming osteosarcomas and fibrosarcomas—some of which ultimately metastasize [37]. Whether the tumor develops as a result of chronic irritation, or whether the parasite elaborates a carcinogenic substance or carries an oncogenic virus has not been determined.

Stomach neoplasms are uncommon in all domestic animal species. The rarity of gastric carcinomas in animals compared to the high frequency of this tumor in man suggests that animals avoid the necessary prolonged contacts with gastric carcinogens, most likely consumed in food, or that they are inherently resistant to the carcinogenic effects of such contacts [38]. Gastric adenocarcinomas can be induced

experimentally in the dog, however, by the intragastric administration of nitrosamine, or by the intragastric formation of N-nitroso compounds from nitrites and amines; tumors induced are locally invasive and eventually metastasize to regional lymph nodes and distant organs [39,40].

Carcinomas involving small or large bowel are uncommon in domestic animals. A seemingly high number of intestinal carcinomas have been reported in sheep from Australia and New Zealand [41,42]. The tumors may be related to environmental factors such as aromatic amines used in orally administered vermicides, intragastric formation of N-nitroso compounds from forage, or undefined factors associated with "fat-lamb" farming [43]. Intestinal carcinomas in sheep arise from the lower jejunum and ileum; the predominant sites in the dog are duodenum and colon, while in the cat, the ileum is the most common site. The cause(s) for these site predilections has not been determined.

Although the role of hereditary or pre-existing intestinal disorders as risk factors for intestinal neoplasms are well established in man, such risk factors have not been clearly defined in animals. Only one case of intestinal carcinoma arising in a colorectal polyp has been described in the dog [44].

Pancreatic neoplasms have been described in most domestic animal species. These tumors are uncommon and few risk factors have been identified. In dogs, ductular and acinar carcinomas occur more frequently in females than in males, are strongly associated with increasing age, and may be found excessively in the Airedale terrier breed [45]. For tumors of the pancreas derived from islet cells, excess numbers have been reported in the standard poodle breed [46].

The cause of most liver tumors in domestic animals is unknown. Hepatoblastoma, similar to the fetal type in man, occurs in domestic animals, particularly in lambs, but the cause of the tumor is unknown [47]. Aflatoxin, produced in food material contaminated by some strains of *Aspergillus flavus*, is a potent liver carcinogen in fish, birds, and some mammals [48], and may play a role in hepatic carcinogenesis in domestic herbivorous animals. An association between parasites and liver cancer in animals is supported by reports of bile duct carcinoma in the dog associated with clonorchiasis, and hepatocellular carcinoma in cattle associated with liver fluke infection [49,50].

The high incidence of hepatocellular carcinoma in human patients with cirrhosis and hemochromatosis is well known. The occurrence of hepatic carcinoma in association with biliary cirrhosis has also been described in cattle in which damage was caused by *Fasciola hepatica*, but no relationship could be found between cirrhosis and liver cancer in a canine study [51].

The environmental carcinogen N-nitrosodiethylamine has been found to be carcinogenic in at least 18 animal species [52]. Following experimental oral administration, the chemical has been used to induce hepatocellular carcinomas, cholangiomas, and squamous cell papillomas of the esophagus in the cat; hemangioendotheliomas, leiomyosarcomas, and fibrosarcomas of the liver in dogs; and several benign and malignant hepatic tumors in pigs [52]. The liver is the main target organ for carcinogenicity of this nitrosamine. Other chemicals shown to be hepatocarcinogenic for dogs by experimental studies include o-aminotoluene, p-dimethylaminoazobenzene [53], 2-acetylaminofluorene [54], and the insecticide Aramite (2-(p-tert-butylphenoxy) isopropyl-2-chloroethyl [55]. Neoplasms of the gall bladder and bile ducts have also been induced in dogs by implantation of methylcholanthrene pellets into the gall bladder [56].

### *Respiratory*

Host and environmental factors contribute to risk for respiratory tract neoplasms in domestic animals.

Intranasal tumors (papillary adenoma or adenocarcinomas) of the ethmoid olfactory mucosa in sheep have been observed in Europe, the United States, Africa, and Japan [57,58]. These tumors have occurred enzootically and seem to be contagious. Viral particles resembling visna-maedi virus have been detected in tumor tissue in some cases, although the role of virus in tumorigenesis is not well established [59]. Ethmoidal carcinomas have also been recognized in cattle, and enzootics have been reported from Hong Kong, Portugal, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic [60]; the cause for these enzootics has not been determined although virus is suspected.

Intranasal tumors (sarcomas and carcinomas) occur more frequently in the dog than in other domestic animal species, and account for 1–2 percent of all canine neoplasms [61]. The risk for intranasal tumors increases with age, but other risk factors have not been established [61,62]. Nasal carcinomas can be induced in the dog by inhalational exposure to soluble forms of single beta-emitting radionuclides, particularly  $^{91}\text{YCl}_3$  and  $^{144}\text{CeCl}_3$ , and it is suspected that nasal cavity epithelium is a major target tissue for these radionuclides [63].

Annual incidence rates for naturally occurring pulmonary neoplasms in domestic animals are unknown but are probably low [64]. Risk increases with age for dog, cat, cow, and horse, and the boxer breed of dog may be at excess risk [65,66]. In sheep, pulmonary carcinoma (Jaagzietke) is an infectious disease caused by a virus and transmitted by aerosol. The early stage of disease is characterized by adenopapillomatous transformation of the alveolar septae. Later, adenocarcinoma resembling bronchiolar-alveolar cell adenocarcinoma of man involves lungs and visceral (metastatic) sites. Type-A and type-C virus particles are consistently demonstrated in tumor tissue in advanced stages of disease [67].

Dogs have been used for experimental radiation and chemical pulmonary carcinogenesis studies. Limited success was obtained by exposure of normal dogs to cigarette smoke or carcinogens derived from smoke; tumorigenesis was inconsistent, and induced tumors were often multicentric and randomly located [68]. Several studies, however, have shown increased numbers of lung tumors in dogs exposed to cigarette smoke when compared to controls, using either intratracheal instillation of carcinogens or inhalation methods of exposure [69–72]. In most cases, latent periods of at least two years occurred following inhalation exposure to induction of lung cancer. Inflammatory, hyperplastic, metaplastic and atypical lesions of the dog respiratory tract could be induced rapidly (five to six months), however, using moderate smoke-exposure systems (i.e., 12 cigarettes/day). The similarity of lesions observed in dogs to those observed in man suggests that the dog is a useful model for bioassay procedures for comparing the health effects of different cigarettes and cigarette-smoke compositions for long-term studies aimed at evaluating chronic lung disease and cancer [73].

Optimization of pulmonary carcinogenesis has recently been reported in dogs using sustained release implantation techniques of either chemical (3-methylcholanthrene) or radiation ( $^{91}\text{YCl}_3$ ) carcinogens. Squamous cell cancers were induced at specific preselected sites, and tumors were preceded by well-defined pre-malignant changes [74].

Plutonium ( $^{239}\text{PuO}_2$ ) is also a potent pulmonary carcinogen in dogs. Following

inhalation of average plutonium doses ranging from 100–1,500 times the maximal permissible level for man, the incidence of pulmonary neoplasia in one large beagle study was nearly 100 percent. Most of the tumors were bronchiolar-alveolar carcinomas of peripheral origin, and many developed distant metastases [75].

Another chemical pulmonary carcinogen for cats is 2-acetylaminofluorene, shown experimentally to cause lung sarcomas [76].

### *Skeleton*

Several factors contributing to bone cancer have been recognized in different animal species. Risk factors include ionizing radiation, chemical carcinogens, viruses, pre-existing bone defects and skeletal abnormalities, and other host factors. Of domestic animal species, bone cancer occurs most frequently in the dog. The increased risk for osteogenic sarcoma of the appendicular skeleton with increasing age in large and giant breeds of dogs is well known, although the cause for this increased risk has not been determined. It has been estimated that the risk for primary bone cancer in large and giant breeds is 60 to 185 times the risk for small dogs [77]. For primary chondrosarcoma of bone large (i.e., boxer, German shepherd), but not giant breeds are at increased risk [78]; for primary hemangiosarcoma of bone, excess numbers have been reported in boxer, German shepherd, and Great Dane breeds [79].

A tendency for familial aggregation of osteogenic sarcoma in Saint Bernard dogs has been described. Analysis of pedigrees of affected dogs suggested that the presence of specific genes within family lines influences susceptibility to osteogenic sarcoma [80].

Ionizing radiation is the only external agent known to produce a diverse array of bone tumors including osteogenic sarcoma, chondrosarcoma, fibrosarcoma, and hemangiosarcoma; nearly all radionuclides that localize in bone can produce bone cancer in laboratory animals, and all mammals tested with appropriate doses of either internal or external radiation have developed bone cancer [81].

The beagle dog has been used frequently in skeletal radiation oncogenesis studies [82–84]. Tumor-inducing radionuclides include  $^{226}\text{Ra}$ ,  $^{239}\text{Pu}$ ,  $^{228}\text{Th}$ ,  $^{228}\text{Ra}$ ,  $^{90}\text{Sr}$ ,  $^{224}\text{Ra}$ ; bone surface seeking radionuclides ( $^{239}\text{Pu}$ ,  $^{228}\text{Th}$ ) produce a higher proportion of osteosarcomas in trabecular regions than do bone volume seeking radionuclides ( $^{226}\text{Ra}$ ,  $^{228}\text{Ra}$ ). A long latent period is necessary for the development of bone tumors in dogs after exposure to radiation.

Hemangiosarcoma involving bone (and extraskeletal sites such as lung, liver, heart) was the most common tumor induced in beagle dogs after inhalational exposure to  $^{90}\text{SrCl}_2$ ,  $^{144}\text{CeCl}_3$ , and relatively insoluble  $^{90}\text{Sr}$  and  $^{144}\text{Ce}$  in fused alumino-silicate particles [85].

The role of oncogenic viruses in naturally occurring or radiation-induced skeletal neoplasms in domestic animals is unknown. Type-C particles resembling those of feline leukemia or sarcoma viruses have been identified in several exostotic osteochondromatous growths in several cats, but the role of virus in disease pathogenesis is unknown [86]. Similarly, other than the induction of osteosarcoma in rabbits using beryllium oxide, little is known regarding chemical induction of bone tumors in domestic animals [81].

Certain syndromes of skeletal maldevelopment or disease have been identified in association with primary bone tumors in animals. The transformation of osteochondroma to osteo- or chondrosarcoma has been reported in the dog and cat [87]; bone sarcomas associated with bone infarctions have been described in the dog [88]; and

osteosarcoma associated with long-standing nutritional osteodystrophy has been described in three cats [89].

An association between foreign bodies such as metallic implants, bullets, shrapnel, and bone sarcoma has been recognized [90]. Similarly, an association between metallic implant devices and osteogenic sarcoma has been described in the dog; many of the tumors were diaphyseal in origin, an unusual site for primary bone cancer in the dog, and all implant devices had been in place for six months to 11 years before neoplasia was recognized [91,92].

### *Endocrine*

Mechanisms for etiopathogenesis of endocrine gland neoplasms may be studied in animals using naturally occurring or induced tumors.

Radiation exposure of the thyroid increases the frequency of neoplasms in experimental animals and man, but ionizing radiation has not been implicated as a cause of naturally occurring thyroid tumors in domestic animals [93,94]. Prolonged thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) stimulation of the thyroid can produce malignancies; this has been demonstrated in animals given goitrogenic drugs and in experimental animals subjected to prolonged iodine deficiency [95]. Several reports from regions of the world where goiter is endemic have suggested that thyroid hyperplasia is a precursor of canine thyroid neoplasms [96,97], but convincing experimental induction of thyroid neoplasms in iodine-deficient dogs is lacking [98].

The role of thyroiditis in the origin of thyroid cancer, suggested by the association of thyroid tumors in human patients with Hashimoto's thyroiditis and Graves' disease is unknown. Long-term follow-up of colonies of experimental beagles with high incidence rates of spontaneous thyroiditis may clarify this relationship [93,99].

The simultaneous occurrence of thyroid neoplasms with other primary tumors of endocrine glands has been recognized in animals and man; in one retrospective study of 144 thyroid neoplasms in dogs, 45 had other primary tumors [93]. Other studies show the association of thyroid (medullary) carcinoma in bulls with pheochromocytoma, and thyroid carcinoma in dogs with chemodectoma [93,100,101].

In dogs, the risk for thyroid cancer rises sharply with age; no sex predilection has been reported, but boxer, beagle, and golden retriever breeds are reported to have increased risk [93]. Thyroid C-cell adenomas derived from the ultimobranchial body occur frequently in cattle; approximately 30 percent of aged bulls are reported to have ultimobranchial thyroid tumors, many of which are biologically active [102,103].

Spontaneous focal hyperplastic and neoplastic changes of secretory (ACTH/MSH) cells occur frequently in both the pars distalis and pars intermedia (pituitary) of old dogs of different breeds; boxer and Boston terrier dogs are at high risk for development of tumors of the pars distalis, while tumors of the pars intermedia appear in all breeds of dogs with equal frequency [104]. The cause for these tumors is unknown; many are functionally active and contribute to endocrine diseases including Cushing's disease, anovulation, disturbances of thyroid function, and possibly mammary tumors [105].

Other than increasing age in dogs, cattle, sheep, and goats, few risk factors associated with neoplasms of the adrenal cortex have been identified in domestic animals. The simultaneous occurrence of adrenal medullary tumors (pheochromocytomas) with ultimobranchial tumors of the thyroid has been mentioned. Also an association between neurofibromatosis and cortical and medullary tumors of the adrenal has been described in cattle [106,107]. Another tumor derived from para-

ganglia, the chemodectoma, occurs most commonly in brachycephalic breeds of dogs over six years of age [108]; an association between hypoxia and enlargement of the carotid body has been described in animals, but its relationship to neoplasia is unknown [109].

### *Urogenital*

Few risk factors associated with renal neoplasms have been described in animals. For dogs, excess risk has been identified for males with increasing age; familial (breed) predisposition has not been recognized, suggesting that genetic determinants (if any) are not conspicuous [110]. An unusually high number of embryonal nephromas have been reported from necropsy and abattoir surveys of swine. In some areas of the United States, this is the most common tumor of swine, although the cause(s) has not been determined [111].

Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) has been shown to be carcinogenic in several species including cattle, mice, rats, guinea pigs, and quail [112]. An association between grazing of cattle on forage in regions of the world where bracken fern grows plentifully, a syndrome known as chronic enzootic hematuria, and cancer of the urinary bladder has been described; tumors reported included an array of benign and malignant epithelial and mesenchymal tumors, although transitional cell carcinomas, hemangiomas, and papillomas predominated [113–115]. No virus has consistently been isolated from the field cases of bladder neoplasms in cattle, although bovine papillomavirus has occasionally been recognized in association with bladder tumors, and fibroma-like lesions can be induced with bovine papillomavirus when injected into submucosa of the urinary bladder of cows [116,117].

In dogs, bladder neoplasms occur more commonly in females than males, and Scottish terriers, Shetland sheepdogs, beagles, and collies are reported to be at excess risk [118]. Other risk factors for naturally occurring bladder tumors in dogs are unknown, although an association between cyclophosphamide-induced hemorrhagic cystitis and transitional cell carcinoma has been described [119].

The dog has served as a model for bladder chemical carcinogenesis studies, particularly using aromatic amines [120]. Early studies in dogs with 2-naphthylamine showed that feeding this compound produced bladder tumors, that bladder cancer would not appear if the urine was diverted, but instead renal pelvic and ureteral tumors would develop [121]. Similar studies have shown that 4-aminobiphenyl, its derivatives, para-aminobiphenyl, and para-nitrobiphenyl are bladder carcinogens for dogs [122,123].

The abdominal or partially descended ectopic testis has an increased risk for cancer in the dog, particularly sertoli cell tumors and seminomas, and dogs with testicular tumors associated with cryptorchidism are younger than those with tumors in descended testes. Dogs with an inguinal hernia also have a higher risk for testicular cancer than normal dogs [124]. Several breeds of dogs have been identified with high risk for different tumor cell types; the multiplicity of breeds suggests that other factors, in addition to heredity, play a role in etiology [124–126].

Ovarian tumors have been described in most domestic animal species, but most often in the dog. For dogs, a striking increase in risk by age for the occurrence of epithelial tumors in contrast to granulosa-theca cell tumors was reported. Breeds of dogs with excess risk include the pointer for epithelial ovarian tumors and the English bulldog for granulosa-theca cell tumors [127]. A relatively high proportion of ovarian tumors of the granulosa-theca cell type are also described in horses [16]; most of the tumors are functional but their cause is unknown [128].

An unusual neoplasm of the external genitalia occurs in dogs; the transmissible venereal tumor is a naturally occurring neoplastic disease characterized by a high rate of spontaneous remission. The tumor affects both sexes and is transmitted by coitus. Experimentally, the transmissible venereal tumor can be transmitted by the transplantation of living cells and is probably a naturally occurring allograft; the tumor is antigenic in the dog and tumor regression is followed by transplantation immunity [129]. The concept of the tumor as a neoplastic allograft is supported by demonstration of the absence of host cell isoantigens on the tumor cells, by its peculiar karyotype, and by the failure of early attempts to transmit the tumor as a cell-free filtrate [130].

Spontaneous and induced tumors of the mammary glands in dogs and cats occur in sufficient numbers to provide useful models for etiological studies. At least 12 breeds of dogs were reported in one study to have significantly high risk for all mammary tumor types and the hunting breeds were disproportionately represented in the high risk breeds [131]. The risk for benign and malignant canine mammary tumors increased with age until 10 years. Neutered bitches had only one-third the risk observed in non-neutered bitches [131]. The importance of reproductive endocrinology in mammary neoplasia has been studied in the dog and cat; bitches neutered before any estrous cycles had significantly lower risk than intact bitches, and this sparing effect was operative if neutering occurred before 2.5 years of age [132]. A similar sparing effect on mammary cancer risk was associated with early ovariectomy in the cat [2].

Specific hormones such as estrogen and prolactin have been incriminated in the genesis of mammary cancer in the bitch, but experimental proof of their role is lacking [105]. In one study, canine mammary tumorigenesis was associated with increased secretory activity of pituitary growth hormone cells, and depressed secretory activity of follicle-stimulating hormone-, luteinizing hormone-, and thyrotrophin-producing cells. Signs of inhibition of ovulation and thyroid function were also observed, and there were concomitant hyperplastic and neoplastic changes of the thyroid and adrenal cortex. These findings suggest that endocrine imbalance mainly of pituitary origin may be involved in spontaneous canine mammary neoplasia [105].

Progesterone and several synthetic progestagens have been used experimentally to induce mammary hyperplasia and tumor development in experimental beagle dogs [133-135]; their effect may be related to the high rate of mammary proliferation induced by these compounds, or to their effects on pituitary hormone secretion [105].

In addition to neoplasms, many hyperplastic, dysplastic, and inflammatory lesions have been recognized in canine mammary glands as naturally occurring lesions, or resulting from administration of progestational agents [136,137]. The biological significance of the non-neoplastic lesions is unknown, but it is tempting to speculate that some of these lesions are pre-neoplastic.

Mammary adenocarcinomas have also been induced in cats using progestagens [138]. A viral cause for feline mammary cancer has been suspected but not confirmed; type-C virus particles resembling feline leukemia virus and type-A particles similar to those found in some mouse mammary tumors have been identified in tumor tissue by immunofluorescence and electron microscopy. The etiological role of these viruses has not been confirmed by transmission studies [139].

### *Neurological*

Breed and species predilections for spontaneous tumors of the nervous system in

domestic animals offer few clues as to etiology. Cats appear to be predisposed to meningiomas and cattle to nerve sheath tumors. Gliomas are more common among brachycephalic breeds of dogs, especially boxers, English bulldogs, and Boston terriers [140]. Naturally occurring neoplasms of the nervous system affect middle-to-old-age animals in all species.

Several types of viruses have been used experimentally to induce tumors of the central nervous system in domestic animals. These viral carcinogenesis studies are reviewed in detail elsewhere [141-144]. Perhaps best studied is the avian sarcoma virus, which has been shown experimentally to be neuro-oncogenic for dogs, cats, and pigs. A variety of tumors have been induced with avian sarcoma virus, including astrocytomas, spongioblastomas, ependymomas, meningiomas, and sarcomas [141,142]. The bovine papillomavirus, a DNA containing virus, has also been used experimentally to induce intra-cranial fibromas and fibrosarcomas, and meningeal fibromas in calves [145].

### SUMMARY

Clues to environmental or host factors in human oncogenesis are derived from clinical or epidemiologic studies; additional evidence has been provided by animal experimentation. There are advantages and limitations to study of cancer in domestic animals. Spontaneous tumors arise in heterogenous outbred animals, and their cause is generally unknown; study of these tumors provides some clues to environmental and host factors in oncogenesis, such as interactions between physical agents and specific genetic abnormalities. Induced tumors in animals are useful because of their reproducibility and predictability, allowing detailed study of specific carcinogens or carcinogenic influences.

Physical carcinogens in domestic animals include ultraviolet and ionizing radiation. Ultraviolet radiation is a cause for skin cancer in several species, and more deeply penetrating ionizing radiation produces a variety of skeletal, lung, and hematopoietic neoplasms, most notably in the dog. Chemical carcinogens affect the urinary bladder, respiratory, and alimentary tracts. Viral oncogenesis has been studied in detail in cats and cattle with retrovirus infections, and bovine papilloma virus infection in heterospecies allows study of viral-induced solid tumors.

Host factors place individual species or breeds of animals at very high or low risk for certain neoplasms. For example, the boxer breed of dog is at high risk for skin, thyroid, and lymphatic neoplasms, although the specific factor(s) influencing risk in this breed is unknown. The influence of gene or chromosomal aberrations or immunodeficiency on cancer risk may be further elucidated by study of specific breed predilections.

The use of large (domestic) animals for carcinogenesis studies is fostered by their size and temperament, allowing relatively easy handling and procurement of large samples of blood or tissue for study. In addition, many pet animals (dogs, cats, horses) have long life spans, and tumors occurring in aged animals may accurately reflect those chronic processes associated with carcinogenesis in nature.

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