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VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Featured in this issue: Director's Message, Featured Staff, Therapeutic Drug Monitoring—Potassium Bromide

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Director's Message

The availability of WEBVAD, an online reporting service of the VDL, has been mentioned in previous newsletters. The VDL now provides the online availability of test results to approximately 150 clients. I am calling it to your attention again because of its additional advantages. These include an automated acknowledgement via e-mail of our receipt of your submission, an opportunity to review your test requests to ensure that you included all the desired requests and we interpreted your requests accurately, and the opportunity to review the portion of test results completed even if other test results are pending. You also have the opportunity, via the click of an icon, to send an email message to the case coordinator with any questions you might have regarding the case, including interpretation, expected time of completion of the case and suggested additional testing.

A new feature allows the user to see the test results on a case in chronological order, with the most recent at the top of the report. There is also an RSS feed capability, which will allow WEBVAD to communicate with you directly and notify you of result updates. Visit the VDL Web page at vetmed.illinois.edu/vdl/ and click on the icon for Test Results Online to subscribe to WEBVAD or for more information on the RSS feed.

Walter E. Hoffmann, DVM, PhD, Interim Director

Featured Staff

Lisa Shipp has been with the VDL as clinical pathology laboratory supervisor for the past 10 years. Lisa received her degree in medical technology from Eastern Illinois University and is certified by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists. Lisa worked in a private medical laboratory before coming to the VDL. Two years ago she accepted the added responsibility of serving as the VDL Quality Assurance (QA) Manager to ensure that the VDL maintains a quality assurance program that meets the accreditation requirements of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) and provides reliable and accurate test results to our clients. Since becoming QA Manager, Lisa has been appointed to the AAVLD national QA committee and has attended training sessions to allow her to be an auditor on AAVLD site visits to other laboratories. This training and experience is extremely valuable in carrying out the daily managerial duties she has here in the VDL. Lisa is also a member of the American Society for Veterinary Clinical Pathology and serves on the Veterinary Laboratory Professionals program committee for their annual meeting.

Therapeutic Drug Monitoring—Potassium Bromide: Dr. Walter Hoffmann

Recently we discussed therapeutic drug monitoring in regard to determination of blood concentrations of phenobarbital. When phenobarbital alone does not control seizures adequately or when the animal does not tolerate the phenobarbital, treatment with potassium bromide is often initiated. (Potassium bromide has been used to control seizures since the 1800s.) Potassium bromide is generally used in conjunction with phenobarbital but can be used as a single agent. A maintenance dose of 20-40 mg/kg is administered sid or divided bid with food. When administered alone, a loading dose is recommended. Blood concentration monitoring is recommended at 4-6 months after initiation of potassium bromine treatment (after 2 months for cats) and every 6-9 months thereafter. The half life of the bromide ion is 11 days for cats while 25 days for dogs, hence the earlier monitoring time recommended for cats. Trough concentrations of 900 to 3000 ug/ml are generally considered the desired therapeutic range, with concentrations in the lower portion of this range usually adequate when using along with phenobarbital while in the upper part of the range when used as a single agent. Obviously the target concentration should take into consideration the effectiveness of controlling the seizures. Clinical signs of toxicity include anorexia, constipation, vomiting, ataxia and sedation and would warrant a determination of the blood concentration of bromide. Determination of the bromide concentration requires a serum sample free of hemolysis and lipemia. The fee for bromide analysis is \$25. The assay is conducted daily Monday through Friday at the VDL.

While not commercially available, the University of Illinois Veterinary Teaching Hospital pharmacy will provide the potassium bromide to practitioners. Call 217-333-5329.

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