Partially Funded Clinical Trial for Head and Neck Tumors in Dogs

Study Title
Evaluation of fluorescent sentinel lymph node imaging for canine head and neck neoplasia

Purpose of the Study
Sentinel lymph node (SLN) biopsy is the standard of care in head and neck cancers in human medicine. The standard agents used are radioactive tracers (Tc-99m colloid) and methylene blue (MB). This study will evaluate the use of indocyanine green (ICG) and fluorescence identification of sentinel lymph nodes using a goggle based device the surgeon wears, in addition to the standard of care with radioactive tracer and methylene blue. The sentinel or first draining lymph nodes from the tumor picked up by any of these modalities will be removed and assessed by histopathology.

Inclusion Criteria
We will be enrolling 10 dogs with head and neck tumors for inclusion in this study.
START DATE: July 1, 2017.
  • Cytology or histopathology confirmation of head and neck tumor
  • The tumor may either be newly diagnosed or recurrent
  • Animal owner committed to surgical excision of tumor and sentinel lymph node mapping with excision of the lymph nodes identified

Treatment
Dogs will undergo sentinel lymph node imaging using fluorescent dyes to identify the sentinel lymph nodes and remove them for histopathology testing. The dog will then undergo surgery to remove their tumor(s). The lymph nodes and tumor will then undergo a thorough histopathological assessment.

Benefits or Risks
The dogs participating in the clinical trial will have a thorough evaluation of the lymphatic drainage from their tumor as part of their staging testing to detect cancer spread. This will benefit the dog in that metastases may be found that might otherwise have been overlooked.

Imaging and collection of additional samples from the surgical site will cause a small increase in anesthesia time (< 15 minutes) and would only be performed if the patient is stable under anesthesia. The standard complications/risks of surgery for removal of lymph nodes include: anesthetic complications, possible bleeding, infection, and wound healing complications [small collection of fluid (seroma), dehiscence, and transient edema]. Additional complications/risks may be applicable due to tumor removal and would not be considered complications of this study depending of the location, type, and size of the tumor and will be discussed at the time of the surgical consult.

Incentives
Pet owners are financially responsible for all costs associated with evaluation and surgery. Each pet owner will receive $200 credit to their Veterinary Teaching Hospital account to cover the costs of the histopathology evaluation.

Contact Information
Please feel free to call Rebecca Kamerer at (217) 333-5311 to refer a patient or for any additional information. Inquiries from both veterinarians and clients are welcome. Owners may schedule appointments by calling (217) 333-5300 and requesting a new appointment with Surgical Oncology.