

'Problem' Visits Hamper Communication

Veterinarians communicate differently with clients during problem appointments—those in which pet health threats are discussed—versus wellness visits, according to a study by Colorado State University's Argus Institute.

During wellness appointments, veterinarians tend to focus on building a client relationship, the study revealed. This includes engaging the client as an active partner in the pet's health, giving the owner an opportunity to voice opinions.

VETORYL® Capsules (trilostane) 30 mg and 60 mg strengths

Adrenocortical suppressant for oral use in dogs only

BRIEF SUMMARY (For Full Prescribing Information, see package insert.)

CAUTION: Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

DESCRIPTION: VETORYL is an orally active synthetic steroid analogue that blocks production of hormones produced in the adrenal cortex of dogs.

INDICATIONS: VETORYL Capsules are indicated for the treatment of pituitary-dependent hyperadrenocorticism in dogs. VETORYL Capsules are indicated for the treatment of hyperadrenocorticism due to adrenocortical tumor in dogs.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: The use of VETORYL Capsules is contraindicated in dogs that have demonstrated hypersensitivity to trilostane. Do not use VETORYL Capsules in animals with primary hepatic disease or renal insufficiency. Do not use in pregnant dogs. Studies conducted with trilostane in laboratory animals have shown teratogenic effects and early pregnancy loss.

WARNINGS: In case of overdose, symptomatic treatment of hypoadrenocorticism with corticosteroids, mineralocorticoids and intravenous fluids may be required. Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors should be used with caution with VETORYL Capsules, as both drugs have aldosterone-lowering effects which may be additive, impairing the patient's ability to maintain normal electrolytes, blood volume and renal perfusion. Potassium-sparing diuretics (e.g., spironolactone) should not be used with VETORYL Capsules as both drugs have the potential to inhibit aldosterone, increasing the likelihood of hyperkalemia.

HUMAN WARNINGS: Keep out of reach of children. Not for human use. Wash hands after use. Do not empty capsule contents and do not attempt to divide the capsules. Do not handle the capsules if pregnant or if trying to conceive. Trilostane is associated with teratogenic effects and early neonatal loss in laboratory animals in the event of accidental ingestion.

reassurance and compliments.

During problem appointments, veterinarians focus predominantly on medical topics. The tone reflects stress—some veterinarians are perceived as hurried and some clients as anxious and emotionally distressed, according to the study.

A paternal style during problem appointments carries the potential for

negative consequences.

"We know that paternalism is not an effective approach for gaining results," said Jane Shaw, DVM, Ph.D., director of the Argus Institute. "Without engaging the client in a conversation about their pet and obtaining their opinion, the client isn't as likely to follow through on home care. Clients also are not as likely to build a strong relationship—and subsequent loyalty—to their veterinarian."

To achieve successful results during both problem and wellness appointments, veterinarians can empower their clients as part-

ners by supporting their emotions and understanding their expectations, Dr. Shaw said.

A strong client relationship improves a veterinarian's ability to gather accurate and complete information and diagnose the problem, according to the institute. Adherence to at-home care recommendations is better when veterinarians encourage the client to participate and negotiate in the decisions.

To help clients open up, Shaw recommends open-ended questions, including:

- * What questions do you have?
- * What options have you considered?
- * What will be the most difficult for you?

Shaw also encourages veterinarians to explore their client's lifestyle to better understand the pet's illness.

Feline Neuter Rate Drops With Family Income, Survey Reports

About 80 percent of cats living in U.S. households are neutered, according to a study published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Assn.

The telephone survey of 1,205 adults, representing 850 cats, also found that annual family income was the strongest predictor of whether cats were neutered with

Cat Allies and co-author of the study, pointed out that household cats represent only part of the total U.S. cat population.

"Research has shown there may be just as many stray and feral cats in the U.S. as pet cats, and most of these cats are intact and breeding," she said. "We need to enact smart policies and programs that award

