



Cancer



This Brochure
courtesy of
Hollyoak
Veterinary Surgery
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What is cancer?

Cancer is one of the most common causes of non-accidental death in dogs and cats. It is a disease caused by an uncontrolled division of body cells, which are the building blocks of all living tissue. Cancer cells lose their normal function. The uncontrolled growth of cells can lead to a localised swelling, called a tumour, or as with cancer of the blood, the cancer cells may move around the body. Benign tumours remain in one place, usually growing slowly, but can cause problems by compressing nearby organs and vessels. Malignant tumours are more aggressive and invade surrounding tissues, and often spread via the circulatory system to other parts of the body.

Although cancer is a worry for most pet owners, there are new treatment options available, outlined in this leaflet, which can offer hope for many pets suffering from cancer.

Factors that can influence the likelihood of a pet developing cancer, include:

AGE

Nearly half of all dogs over 10 years old will develop cancer.

BREED

Certain tumours are more common in specific canine breeds e.g. skin tumours in Boxers, tumours of the spleen in German Shepherd Dogs, and bone cancer in the giant breeds. Siamese cats appear to be more at risk than other cat breeds.

GENDER

Some cancers develop under the influence of sex hormones, such as mammary tumours in females and prostatic growths in males.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Exposure to chemicals such as some pesticides and herbicides and radiation such as x-rays.

Recognising the signs of cancer

- Abnormal swellings that persist or continue to grow
- Sores that do not heal
- Weight loss
- An abnormally large or small appetite
- Bleeding or discharge from any body orifice
- Offensive odour
- Difficulty eating or swallowing
- Hesitation to exercise, or loss of stamina
- Persistent lameness or stiffness
- Difficulty in breathing
- Difficulty in urinating or defaecating

IMPORTANT

These are the most common signs but cancer is so complex, there may be others that are not listed.

Showing any of these signs does not automatically mean your pet has cancer, but all are worthy of veterinary attention. Please seek advice immediately.



Diagnosis

Because there are several types of cancer, your vet may perform one or more of the following diagnostic tests:

Palpation

An examination of the pet, feeling for lumps and bumps.

Blood tests

These tests look at the blood cells, and also determine levels of substances that may have resulted from tissue damage caused by cancer.

Biopsy

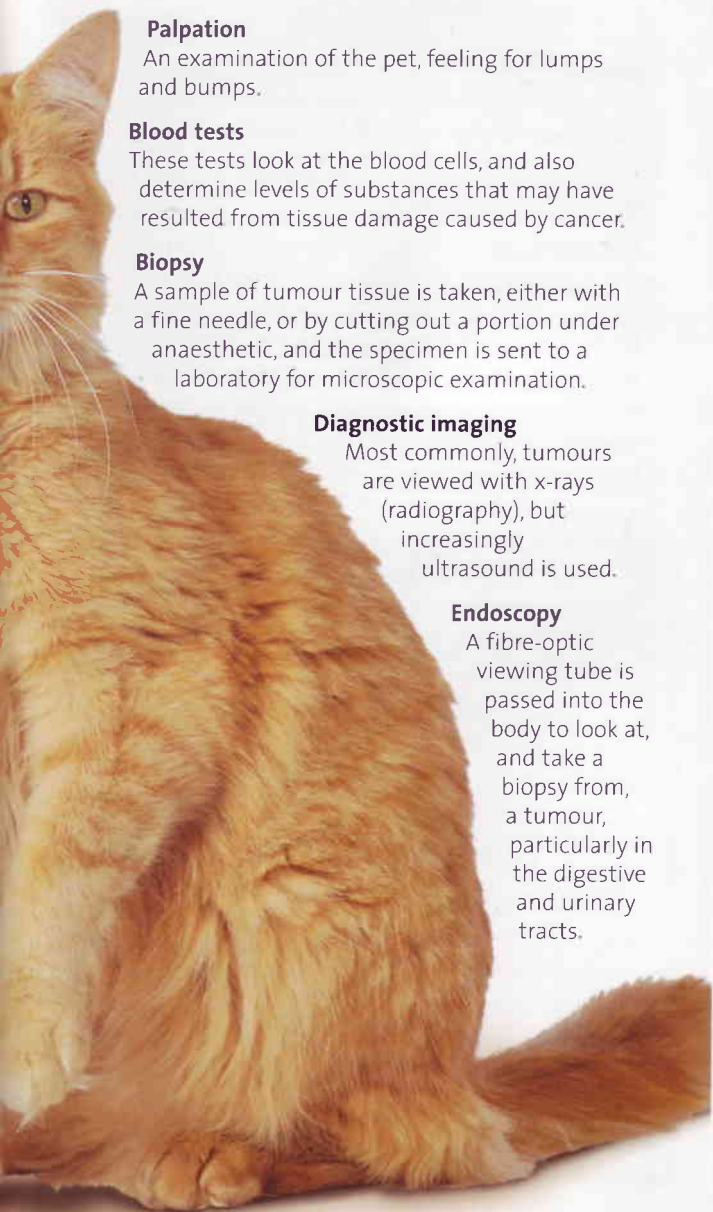
A sample of tumour tissue is taken, either with a fine needle, or by cutting out a portion under anaesthetic, and the specimen is sent to a laboratory for microscopic examination.

Diagnostic imaging

Most commonly, tumours are viewed with x-rays (radiography), but increasingly ultrasound is used.

Endoscopy

A fibre-optic viewing tube is passed into the body to look at, and take a biopsy from, a tumour, particularly in the digestive and urinary tracts.



Management and control of pets with cancer

If your pet is diagnosed with cancer, one of today's many treatment options can lead to a positive outcome.

Surgery

For localised tumours, an operation to remove the tumour can lead to complete recovery.

If the cancer is aggressive or has spread, your vet may recommend the following:

Chemotherapy

This is the use of special anti-cancer drugs to destroy cancer cells. Chemotherapy drugs are sometimes given as a tablet or more usually by injection into a vein.

Radiotherapy

Performed in specialist centres, this treats cancer by using high energy rays to destroy the cancer cells while doing as little harm as possible to normal cells.

Nutrition

Nutrition has recently been shown to have a critical role in the management of pets with cancer. Hill's provides a range of specially formulated products, to be fed under veterinary supervision, that may help in the battle against cancer.



For dogs, Hill's* Prescription Diet* Canine n/d* is the first food clinically proven to nutritionally help counteract the effects of canine cancer and the side effects of cancer therapy. It has been proved to increase survival time and improve the quality of life for dogs undergoing chemotherapy. The unique

formulation of Canine n/d helps feed the pet, but starve the tumour.

Hill's* Prescription Diet* Canine/Feline a/d* is high in energy, proteins, fats and appropriate micronutrients to help pets maintain immune function and counter debilitation and loss of appetite.

Owner's checklist

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- ✓ Watch for the signs and symptoms listed earlier
- ✓ Feed only the food recommended by your vet
- ✓ Check carefully for any new lumps or bumps on a regular basis
- ✓ Maintain your pet's usual routine wherever possible
- ✓ Monitor your pet's weight, activity and general health
- ✓ Pets receiving chemotherapy may have specific side effects, please discuss these with your vet

FEEDING GUIDE

All Hill's products are extremely palatable foods that are eagerly accepted by most pets. However, when undergoing cancer treatment your pet may have a reduced appetite or be less willing to eat. If your pet does resist this change of food, the following tips may help:



- Introduce the new food gradually – mix it with your pet's usual food, adding more of it each day until you have completed the change-over
- Warm canned food to body temperature – but no hotter – before feeding
- If your pet refuses to eat for more than 48 hours, discuss the problem with your vet

Remember our food is 100% Guaranteed – we promise complete satisfaction or we buy it back.

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