

Quick Tips – From the ER

Ventricular Arrhythmias:

There has been a certain dogma associated with treatment of ventricular arrhythmias, possibly based on their dangerous nature in human cases of coronary arterial disease. According to current research on animals with NORMAL myocardial function:*

1. There is NO proof that ventricular rhythms are directly associated with sudden death in dogs regardless of prematurity, frequency, or polymorphology.
2. Idioventricular rhythms that do not exceed 170 bpm DO NOT compromise ventricular filling or heart function.
3. Antiarrhythmic therapy HAS NOT been shown to prevent sudden death in patients with ventricular arrhythmias.

When and how to treat ventricular arrhythmias:

1. Treat those animals with recognizable signs of decreased cardiac function such as syncope, weakness, hypotension, blanched membranes, or acute exacerbation of heart failure where you suspect the clinical signs are directly related to changes in rhythm.
2. Because frequency and pattern of VPCs are unpredictable, response to therapy can only be assessed by in-hospital constant monitoring.
3. The need for treatment should be challenged frequently by periodic discontinuation.

*Exceptions are dogs with DCM, in particular Dobermans, and a population of German Shepherds with spontaneous and ominous VPCs. For cats, VPCs are most commonly associated with primary heart disease, in contrast to dogs.

Source: David H Knight. Manuscript for CVT XIII. "Reason must supersede dogma in the management of ventricular arrhythmias."

*We hope you found this information helpful,
The team of PESCM*



PET EMERGENCY
& SPECIALTY CENTER OF MARIN

901 East Francisco Blvd.
San Rafael, CA 94901

415.456.7372
www.pescm.com