Has your dog been diagnosed with idiopathic epilepsy but is not yet receiving any treatment?

New RVC study investigates the effects of Imepitoin (Pexion) on the behaviour of dogs with idiopathic epilepsy

Idiopathic epilepsy is the most common neurological disorder affecting dogs. A wide variety of medical treatment options are available and are well investigated; however, not much is known about the impact of anti-epileptic drugs on dog behaviour. As such, we are carrying out a study focusing on the impact of Imepitoin on the behaviour of dogs diagnosed with idiopathic epilepsy.

How can you get involved?

We are interested in dogs that meet the following 4 criteria:

1. Are aged between 1-10 years
2. Have been diagnosed with idiopathic epilepsy, EITHER
   - By your regular vet due to a history of two or more unprovoked seizures at least 24 hours apart, age of first seizure between 6 months and 6 years of age, no physical or neurological abnormalities between seizures, and no abnormalities on blood tests and urinalysis OR
   - By a neurology specialist with blood tests, bile acids, MRI and CSF analysis
3. Have not yet received ANY anti-epileptic drugs to treat their epilepsy
4. Only experience single seizures (no more than one seizure in any 24 hour period)

What will the project involve?

- Treatment with Imepitoin: an anti-epileptic drug that is licensed to reduce the number of seizures that your dog has – the study will involve 4 weeks of treatment with Imepitoin, which should be continued after the study ends.
- Two visits to the RVC in Hertfordshire: once at the start and once at the end of the four week period. During these visits your dog will undergo:
  o Behaviour tests: four short tests, including your dog’s response to a new object, a new room, and being briefly left alone. All tests will be video recorded to analyse your dog’s behaviour before and after treatment with Imepitoin.
- Collection of saliva samples at the start and end of the study to measure the stress hormone ‘cortisol’.
- A diary of your dog’s seizures (or use of our new Pet Epilepsy Tracker smartphone app) to see the effect of Imepitoin on their epilepsy.

We hope this information will further our understanding of epilepsy and the treatments vets prescribe for it, and aid vets in giving advice to owners such as yourself in the future. All owners who complete the study will receive £50 towards their dog’s veterinary care.

If you are interested in joining this study, are not sure if your dog is eligible to participate, or have any other queries, please contact Dr Rowena Packer via email at rpacker@rvc.ac.uk.

The data collected in this study will be collated and stored at the Royal Veterinary College in London (RVC). Your data will be anonymised as appropriate. Your personal information will be held and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised person or body.