



Interesting Case from our web site www.fairfield-vets.co.uk



"Toby" - Jack Russell with Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease



Toby is brought out from his kennel by Kerry, our trainee nurse.



Radiograph outlining the changes evident with Legg-Calve-Perthes disease.

Amongst the most interesting conditions that we treat at Fairfield are those where the cause remains a mystery and there is a comparable problem in humans.

Last week Toby, a 10 month old Jack Russell Terrier presented to me because he was limping on his right hind leg. Examination revealed significant pain in his hip region. Due to the degree of discomfort that was evident and the level of lameness x-rays were advised and carried out.

It was clear from the x-rays that there were significant abnormalities in the right hip joint. The joint space was wider than normal, the femoral head had become misshapen and the overall bone density of the hip was poor.

All this evidence supported a diagnosis of Legg-Calve-Perthes disease. This hip condition in children was first described by three independent doctors in 1910 and has subsequently taken their names. It wasn't until 1935 that an almost identical problem was identified in young small breed dogs.

In humans the condition affects mainly boys (80%) aged between 5-10 years. In dogs both sexes appear to be equally affected but as in humans it is the youngsters that are susceptible 5-12 months. Interestingly, in both humans and dogs the condition predominantly affects one side only (90%).

Whilst no-one has yet established a cause for this painful problem the effects of the disease have been extensively studied. It is clear that the blood supply to the hip joint becomes compromised leading to the death and disintegration of the hip bone. Left untreated this can lead to collapse of the hip joint and resultant severe and debilitating arthritis.

The treatment of choice is the removal of the diseased bone and the formation of a pseudoarthrosis or false joint through appropriate physiotherapy. So far Toby's surgery has been successful and it shouldn't be too long before he is able to run around on all four legs as fast as ever.

Terry Dunne BVMS, Cert SAO, MRCVS

This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at www.fairfield-vets.co.uk

You won't care how much we know - until you know how much we care