

Feline Hyperthyroidism Drug Shows Promise

New study focuses on once-daily drug for the condition.

Posted: February 4, 2010, 3 a.m. EST

A new study has revealed that Vidalta, a once-daily oral formulation of carbimazole designed for cats with hyperthyroidism, normalizes thyroid hormone levels and improves clinical signs.

"Hyperthyroidism treatments available up until now were conventional tablets that had to be administered orally two or three times daily," said Dr. Linda Horspool, one of the lead researchers. "As cats can be difficult to pill, reduction of the dosing frequency — as is possible with this new controlled-release formulation — may have contributed to the good ease of administration reported by the cat owners in our study."

The effects of carbimazole were studied in 44 client-owned cats (average age of 14 years) suspected to have hyperthyroidism based on clinical signs and confirmed by serum total thyroxine concentration levels.

After 10 days of treatment, serum thyroxine concentrations dropped from presentation to within the reference range. The concentrations decreased further by the end of the study.

In addition, the study revealed that clinical signs improved or resolved in almost all of the cats within a few weeks after starting treatment and remained stable thereafter.

Adverse reactions were generally mild, according to the researchers.

The main clinical signs of hyperthyroidism, a disease that is common in middle-aged to older cats, include weight loss, restlessness, depression and aggression.

The one-year study, published in the October issue of the Journal of Small Animal Practice, was conducted by Dr. Regis Frenais, research scientist at Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health; Dr. Linda Horspool, global technical lead for pharmaceuticals in the Companion Animal Business Unit at Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health; and other colleagues.