

Alabama rot (CRGV)- Information Sheet for Clients

What is CRGV?

CRGV is a disease caused by damage to blood vessels of the skin and kidney. It causes tiny blood clots to form in the blood vessels which blocks them and can ultimately lead to damage of the affected tissue. In the skin, this causes ulceration; however, in the kidney it can lead to severe organ dysfunction (kidney failure).

What causes CRGV?

The cause at this time remains unknown but investigations are ongoing.

How do I stop my dog from getting CRGV?

Unfortunately, as the cause is currently unknown, it is very difficult to give specific advice about prevention. You may wish to consider bathing any area of your dog which becomes wet or muddy on a walk; however, at this stage we do not know if this is necessary or of any benefit.

Where should I walk my dog to avoid CRGV?

Cases of CRGV have been reported from across many different counties in the UK and we are not currently advising dog owners to avoid any particular locations. Although an environmental cause for this disease is considered possible it has not been proven with testing to date.

How will I know if my dog gets CRGV?

Unexplained redness, sores or swelling of the skin (particularly on the paws or legs but also the body, face, tongue or mouth) are often the first sign of this disease. It is important to remember that most of the time a skin problem will NOT be caused by CRGV; however, the lesions in CRGV can be difficult to distinguish from cuts, wounds, stings or bites, so if in doubt it is better to seek veterinary advice. Even if the skin changes are caused by CRGV, many dogs will not develop kidney problems and will recover fully.

KEY MESSAGE: although CRGV can be very serious, the number of dogs affected with skin lesions and kidney failure remains low (56 confirmed cases across the UK between November '12 and May '15) Recent work by the senior curator of herbarology, from the Natural History Museum, suggests that plants are an unlikely trigger for CRGV.

How is CRGV treated?

If your dog develops a skin lesion your vet will be able to advise you on the most appropriate management. Your vet will decide if your dog needs antibiotics and if the area needs covering. Some forms of painkiller (called non-steroidals) may be best avoided. Dogs developing kidney failure (which is called acute kidney injury) will need much more intensive management and your vet may recommend referral to a specialist.

Research

CRGV questionnaire: Anderson Moores worked with the Animal Health Trust to develop a questionnaire for dog owners. This can be completed by any dog owner and gives valuable information regarding whether or not there are differences between how dogs who develop CRGV live versus dogs who do not develop CRGV.

This can be found at: www.aht.org.uk/cms-display/aki.html

More information

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Is CRGV the same illness as seasonal canine illness (SCI)?

No – these are 2 completely separate illnesses causing different signs. SCI causes vomiting, diarrhoea and lethargy with no ulcerative skin lesions.

Can dogs get CRGV all year round?

Over the last 3 years, more CRGV cases have been seen between November and May than between June and October, suggesting a possible Winter / Spring seasonality.

Does CRGV affect other animals or humans?

CRGV has not been seen in animals other than dogs. Owners of dogs affected by CRGV have not been affected by this illness.