

Emergency Quarterly

Animal Emergency & Referral Center of West Houston

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Just as we are committed to providing top-level medical care, our practice is dedicated to providing you with the best service possible. We'd sincerely appreciate it if you could let us know how we're doing by taking a quick and easy, online survey compiled by [AAHA](#). The survey features about 20 questions and should only take about 10 minutes of your time.

To begin the survey, click [here](#). The first question will ask for a PIN. Please Use: **71112608**.

You have until **October 11, 2011** to complete the survey. Thank you for your time and valuable feedback!

Head Trauma

By Suzanne Merritt

Head trauma can be caused by falling from a height, an object falling on the animal, or even the pet being hit by a car. Depending on the severity of the injury, head trauma can be life threatening and can lead to cardiovascular and respiratory impairments. Traumatic events can be difficult to diagnose if the injury was not observed, especially since patients can present with widely varied symptoms. Therefore, diagnosis of head trauma must, at times, be based on signs seen on clinical presentation. These signs include varying levels of consciousness, bleeding from the eyes, ears, nose or mouth, asymmetric pupils (anisocoria), skull or facial fractures, hypotension, or other symptoms of shock.

Animals in shock may present with altered consciousness without having sustained trauma to the brain, so metabolic diseases, as well as other intracranial diseases, should be ruled out. Baseline tests, such as CBC (Complete Blood Count),

Chemistries, Urinalysis and Blood Gas for example, can help rule out metabolic disease. Be sure to avoid jugular venipuncture, as this will increase intracranial pressure. Other diagnostics include: blood pressure, pulse oximetry, EKG, and radiographs to assess for facial or skull fractures. Additionally, initial stabilization should be pursued.

The goal of treatment for head trauma is to prevent and/or minimize the effects of secondary brain injury as a result of increased intracranial pressure and other systemic abnormalities. Treatment consists of: fluid support with crystalloids (ie LRS, NaCl)/colloids (ie Hetastarch) to maintain normotension, mannitol to decrease intracranial pressure, and oxygen as needed to sustain adequate oxygenation. Monitoring includes: serial neurologic evaluation every 4-6 hours, blood pressure and SpO₂ monitoring, PCV/TP, and vital signs.

Although we hope your pets will never need our services, we are ready to deliver the care he or she deserves, should you need it.

Blood gas chemistry and EKG may also be monitored if indicated. Recumbent patients should be kept lateral and turned every 2-4 hours; however, mild elevation of the head can be done to avoid regurgitation and aspiration.

Prognosis and outcome are dependent on severity of the initial injury. Possible complications of head trauma consist of infection, seizures, renal failure and persistent neurologic deficits. Lastly, these patients may be at risk for future seizure disorders. It is extremely important to have any pet assessed if there is a possibility that he/she may have sustained trauma to the head.



[Eco Pets](#) feature products that are eco-friendly, created sustainably, organic and made in the USA. Pet lovers can also find a variety of items that support their love of pets and pet charities.



Have you found us on [Facebook](#) yet? If not, it's real easy to do so, go to [Facebook.com/aecwh](#) and "like" us.

You can get alerts when we post messages such as food recalls, or interesting animal facts.

Lost or Found a Dog

[Cypress Lost Dogs](#) is a community website for posting and finding lost dogs in the Cypress, Texas area.

This site was created as a [BSA Troup 120](#), Eagle Project by Thomas Harper. Thomas is a 17-year-old who graduated from [Cypress Lakes High School](#) in 2011. Thomas has other projects he is working on in preparation for his Eagle Scout.

Thomas has a family friend who often finds lost dogs. Dogs are close to Thomas' heart and he had the idea of creating a self-managed lost-and-found website. He has designed the site to be very user-friendly and AERCWH hopes he has great success with his site.

If you live in **Copperfield Place, Easton Commons, Middlegate, Northmead, Southcreek, Southdown** or **Westcreek Village** and you have lost a pet, you can visit [Copperfield.org](#) and post information and email a photo of your lost pet.

The process is simple, email a photo and detailed description of your lost pet and the Copperfield.org webmaster will post your information for you.

If you have found a pet, this is a good way to hopefully locate his or her family.

For a list of other Lost or Found websites, please visit the [Lost Pet](#) page on our website.



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Immune-Mediated Hemolytic Anemia IHMA

By Priscilla Paradise

Q: What is immune-mediated hemolytic anemia?

A: Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia (IMHA) is a condition where the pet's immune system begins to attack his/her own red blood cells. When too many red blood cells are destroyed, the pet has a low red blood cell count ("anemia").

Q: What are some common clinical signs ("symptoms") seen at home?

A: Some of the common clinical signs seen at home by owners are: general weakness, sluggish behavior ("lethargy"), lack of appetite ("anorexia"), exercise intolerance, rapid or difficulty breathing ("tachypnea/dyspnea"). Owners might also notice that his/her pet is drinking more than usual and have very dark orange/brown urine. Pets can also have pale/yellow gums and may experience vomiting and episodes of diarrhea.

Q: What diagnostic tests are involved with IMHA?

A: The main goals for performing the diagnostic tests are to **a)** confirm the presence (and underlying cause) of IMHA and **b)** to learn the type of anemia (*responsive vs. non-responsive*). The following diagnostic tests are performed: comprehensive profile, urinalysis, 3DX (*erlichiosis, lyme, heartworm*), clotting times (PT, aPTT) and radiographs. Once all of the test results are reviewed, the pet's veterinarian will discuss the findings and the steps involved for treatment.

Q: What is the treatment plan for IMHA?

A: The main goal for caring for a pet with IMHA is to treat early and aggressively. During the initial acute crisis (*when the body*



is actively destroying the red blood cells), the pet gets hospitalized and is placed on fluid therapy (*to maintain the pet's fluid balance and nutritional needs*), blood transfusion(s) (*packed red blood cells depending on the severity of the anemia*), immune suppression therapy (*to stop the immune system from further red blood cell destruction*) and antibiotic therapy (*depending on the cause of the disease*). During the pet's hospitalization, diagnostic tests (CBC, PT/aPTT) are performed to confirm the efficacy of the therapy. Once the initial crisis is controlled and the pet is stable (clinical signs have resolved), outpatient treatment begins. Corticosteroids (prednisone, dexamethasone) are initially started at high doses and then gradually tapered down to the lowest effective dose. It is very important for the owner to understand that withdrawing medications prematurely can cause red blood cell destruction to reoccur. Regular monthly blood tests will be performed by the pet's veterinarian to monitor therapy and to detect any complications. Immune suppression therapy can last weeks to months and may be a lifelong therapy.

CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation)

Knowing the proper way to perform CPR on your pet could mean the difference between life and death.

Several pets each year die before arriving at an emergency veterinary clinic. Performing CPR on your pet could add valuable minutes which would allow you time to get to an emergency facility where your pet can get the professional care he/she needs.

The Animal Emergency & Referral Center of West Houston is planning a class on the proper way to perform CPR on your pet.

We had several interested, but still have room for more.

If you are interested in attending this class, please send an email to newsletter.aecwh@hotoffice.net.

All proceeds will benefit [Friends of Moose](#).



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832.593.VETS (8387)

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Visit our Website for information such as:

- *News & Information*
- *Client Feedback Forms*
- *Care Credit Application*
- *Common Emergencies & Past Cases*
- *Pet Memorials*
- *Links to Other Helpful Websites, and*
- *Hospital Policies*



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