

Introduction

Large numbers of pets die or become sick before their time despite the best efforts of veterinarians. I believe much of this has to do with hormonal imbalances that destabilize and weaken animals' immune systems, undermine their natural protection against illness, and rob them of health and longevity.

Many “end-of-the-line animals” are referred to me in my clinical practice. Their owners have been told that euthanasia is the only option left. In some very advanced cases this may be true, but in a vast majority of situations there is hope because there is a solution.

Many years ago as a young practitioner I tried to figure out why so many of my patients were getting sick and not responding to standard treatments. My clinical work led me to a major hormonal-immune system disturbance that begins in the adrenal glands and goes on to create a ripple effect throughout the body's physiology, opening the door to conditions ranging from common skin allergies to reproductive failure to catastrophic autoimmune disease to cancer. By identifying and correcting this problem I created a successful program that has helped thousands of my own patients as well as many animals treated at other veterinary clinics.

The endocrine-immune imbalances I see result from an unsuspected deficiency, defect, or binding of cortisol. Whether from genetics, toxicity, stress, or combinations thereof, many animals lack active cortisol. I correct this deficiency by using very low dosages of cortisone—the pharmaceutical equivalent of the body's naturally occurring cortisol—on a long-term basis. In my practice I use both synthetic cortisone medications and a natural cortisol preparation derived from an ultra extract of soy. When used at very low dosages (often in conjunction with thyroid supplementation) they represent safe and significant healing agents for many seemingly unrelated diseases.

The protocol has been extremely effective when followed as directed on a long-term basis by pet owners. As a clinician, my patients are my primary concern. For that reason I have not conducted controlled studies where one group of patients receives treatment and another group, for comparison, receives a placebo. I cannot in good conscience deny treatment to suffering animals who I know will benefit from that treatment. Perhaps such an experiment can be done by researchers who have the means and interest.

TREATMENT PLAN FOR HUMANS

William Jefferies, M.D., emeritus clinical professor of internal medicine at the University of Virginia, pioneered long-term, low-dosage cortisone treatments for humans. Now in his eighties, Jefferies has reported for years that this method safely and effectively improves patients with allergies, chronic fatigue, and autoimmune disorders. Yet, just as in veterinary medicine, this effective treatment for humans has been generally ignored.

Until recently, Jefferies and I were not aware of our parallel work—one in human medicine, the other in veterinary medicine. We met for the first time in 2002 when I was invited to present my findings to physicians at a conference sponsored by the Broda O. Barnes M.D. Research Foundation in Trumbull, Connecticut.

Cortisone has a considerable stigma attached to it. But, as both Jefferies and I found independently, the problem of side effects relates largely to the use of powerful, pharmacologic dosages, and not to smaller, physiologic dosages. This is an important distinction. (See Figure 1 for a more detailed comparison between the functions, side effects, and benefits of pharmacologic and physiologic cortisone.) So, too, is the understanding that these small, physiologic dosages of natural cortisol or synthetic cortisone medications are used as a form of hormone replacement to compensate for a hormone defect.

My new book, *Pets at Risk: From Allergies to Cancer, Remedies for an Unsuspected Epidemic* (NewSage Press 2003), offers detailed instructions on how to perform

the blood test I developed to identify cortisol-based endocrine-immune imbalances and how to translate the results into an individually calibrated and effective hormone replacement program.

If followed carefully, the program can significantly and rapidly improve even very sick animals. It is also an approach that I believe may offer significant insights for the treatment of human illnesses.

Some of the information contained in this syllabus has been published in medical and health journals; some is currently scheduled for publication at the time of this printing. My article, “Unrecognized Adrenal-Immune Disturbance in Pets Offers Therapeutic Insights for Multiple Human Disorders,” was previously published under the title “Chaos in the Cortex,” in the April 2003 issue of the *Townsend Letter for Doctors & Patients*. The article gives an overview of the endocrine-immune imbalance mechanism. The subsequent articles present specific perspectives: how pollution and toxicity can damage endocrine-immune homeostasis and the mechanism’s involvement in infertility, vaccination complications, and cancer. Finally, I share clinical perspectives intended to be of practical help to clinicians.

I welcome communication from health professionals interested in exploring the role of endocrine-immune imbalances.

ALFRED J. PLECHNER, D.V.M.