

Canine Hereditary Cancer Consortium – From Bark to Bedside

Van Andel Institute | Instructions for Grand Rapids Area Veterinarians

The Study

The purpose of the study is to determine how genes impact the development of cancer in dogs. Specifically, researchers will study abnormalities in genes and chromosomes in a variety of canine cancers to determine if these abnormalities are inherited and to assess their clinical significance (if they are predictive regarding response to treatment and prognosis).

The study is supported by the National Cancer Institute, Van Andel Research Institute, and private donations.

Participation in this study will include the regular admission and discharge procedures associated with a veterinary referral hospital.

Materials for this study (blood and tumor samples) will be obtained during the normal procedures performed for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer or upon post mortem examination.

Participant Requirements

Purebred or mixed breed dogs can participate in this study.

Dogs must have a diagnosis of cancer from a licensed veterinarian and be in good enough health to tolerate diagnostic procedures (radiographs, blood draw, and biopsy) and treatment.

The affected dog can be male or female, intact or neutered, and must be at least 4 months of age.

Compensation for Participation, Therapy or Injuries

The study will not provide compensation for participation, veterinary expenses, therapy or any accidental injury that may occur.



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Enrollment

No participant may be enrolled into the study without prior approval of the CHCC.

The owner of the affected dog must read and sign the CHCC General Owner Consent Form. The form authorizes blood collection and excisional biopsies.

Instructions to Veterinarians

The CHCC must be contacted at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled procedure. Special shipping media, materials, and pertinent instructions will be transported by car to the attending veterinarian.

Any information that has diagnostic relevance will be communicated to the referring veterinarian in a timely manner.

After the study, follow-up information will be required for each participant. The information requested will include specific treatment protocol, time to remission, disease-free interval, condition and time of relapse (if applicable), survival time, and cause of death. Updates to the participant's medical records should be faxed to the VARI Canine Hereditary Cancer Consortium at (616) 234-5795.

Specific Instructions for Sample Submission

Blood Samples

Approximately 5 ml of blood must be submitted using the supplied EDTA ("purple-top") tubes. Please isolate the blood tubes in a sealed, impermeable (e.g., Ziploc) bag. Blood samples may be refrigerated prior to pick-up. Please label each tube with the dog's name, breed, and sex.

In cases where it is not possible to obtain blood samples we will provide a saliva collection kit.

Tumor Samples

We require fresh, sterile, viable tissues for this study. It is imperative that tissues be obtained from viable areas, as necrosis will hinder our ability to use the samples. Sterile, viable tissue allows for the establishment of immortalized cell lines that can be used in the laboratory, for years to come, to study the processes that lead to cancer, as well as to develop novel therapies. A large enough sample of viable tissue allows the investigators to allocate a suitable sample for fixation and histopathology, so it is not necessary to submit fixed tissues.

Collection of viable tissue requires exceptional attention to detail and aseptic technique. The excised, sterile tumor must be placed in a sterile container with a sterile support medium (provided by the investigators as pH buffered saline with antibiotics). If the tumor sample is too large to fit in the conical ("orange-top") tube provided, it can be cut into smaller sections using sterile instruments while the tumor is placed on a sterile surface (for example, a sterile sponge or the surgical drape). The tissue must never contact a non-sterile surface (for example, the operating table or the instrument table). Sterile saline (0.9% NaCl) is unacceptable as transport media because the lack of a buffered pH makes the solution acidify rapidly, diminishing the viability of the tissue. Lactated Ringer's is a suitable substitute. Please label shipment containers with the dog's name, breed, and sex.



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The container(s) with the sterile tumor sample should be placed immediately on ice or in a refrigerator. A representative of VARI will pick up the sample as soon as it is ready for transport.

Please also return one completed copy of the CHCC General Owner Consent Form along with the shipment.

If they are available we would appreciate receiving copies of any histopathology reports, blood tests, radiograph, and ultrasound results.

Formalin-fixed samples or samples submitted in any fashion other than that described above are unsuitable for the study and cannot be accepted.

Questions

For more information regarding this study, please contact the VARI Canine Hereditary Cancer Consortium at 616-234-5569 (phone), 616-234-5795 (fax), or chcc@vai.org (email).

PLEASE NOTE: Eligibility Criteria Require Submissions of Viable Tissues for Participation.



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