

valere referrals



Welcome...

to the Vale Referrals Spring newsletter. Spring has well and truly sprung in the sunny Cotswolds. April has seen a trip to BSAVA, increasing numbers at our South Wales Oncology Clinic as well as here at Vale. Work on our car park is due to start imminently, we will endeavour to keep disruption to a minimum whilst the works are carried out, more parking will be created!

News in brief

European Specialist

We are proud to report that our surgeon, Michal Vlasin DVM PhD Dipl.ECVS, MRCVS, has been awarded European Specialist status in Small Animal Surgery. This huge achievement has taken many years of long study hours and hard work. Michal has dedicated his career to learning and developing advanced surgical techniques and his in depth knowledge of his field is a true testament to the years of experience he has gained. Vale are excited to have Michal on board and look forward to being able to offer advanced surgery techniques alongside Richard Artingstall MA VetMB Cert SAS MBA MRCVS.

Huge congratulations Michal.



IVC Referral Study Day



Vale Referrals joined with Referral vets from other leading referral centres in the South West on 7th March to provide a full day of CPD aimed at first opinion practices.

A total of 86 vets took part in the event, set at De Vere Tortworth Court Hotel in Gloucestershire. The study day involved presentation lectures in the morning, and round table learning in the afternoon. 18 Referral Vet speakers from Bath, Rowe and Vale Referrals delivered talks on a range of topics including ophthalmology, soft tissue surgery, cardiology, orthopaedics, internal medicine, oncology, analgesia and dermatology. The study day was designed to help vets build confidence and knowledge around the decision to refer. Vale would like to thank our sponsors who kindly supported the day: Ceva, Imotek, Kruuse, Burtons, Veterinary Instrumentation, TVM and MSD Animal Health, who all exhibited at the event.

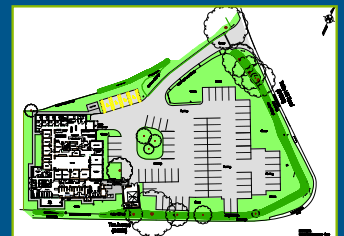
Nurse Team

Our nursing team has grown with the addition of Abi Horrocks RVN. Abi has a great love and energy for referral nursing and has fitted into our team perfectly. She has a cool, calm and collected approach to everything she does. **Welcome to the team Abi!**



Extension Plans

Exciting times ahead here at the hospital, our extension plans have been approved and will be going ahead over the next year. This will give us the space we need for our expanding team and ensure we have fantastic operating facilities available for our ever increasing client base.



This edition is dedicated to Izzy



Advances in BOAS treatment

Folded Flap Palatoplasty as a more effective method for treatment of brachycephalic obstructed airway syndrome (BOAS).



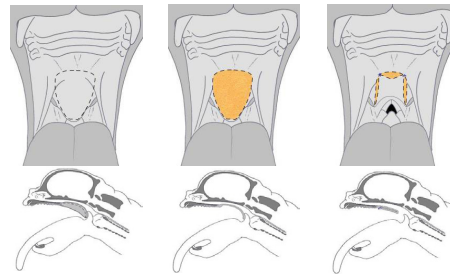
Article by
Michal Vlasin
DVM PhD Dipl.ECVS MRCVS

Overlong or elongated soft palate is a major part of brachycephalic obstructed airway syndrome (BOAS) - a common and widespread condition seen in brachycephalic dogs. BOAS not only results in respiratory compromise (stertorous breathing and collapse) but is often associated with gastrointestinal signs (e.g. reflux or regurgitation) due to an underlying oesophageal dysmotility and/ or hiatal hernia. Recent studies have documented the role of medical management in the control of some of the common gastrointestinal signs and an improvement in the overall prognosis of the condition, however surgical relief of upper airway obstruction still constitutes the cornerstone of BOAS treatment.

Most, if not all brachycephalic dogs that suffer from BOAS signs are reported to suffer from elongated soft palate (ESP), which can cause aspiration after blocking the epiglottis during the swallowing process. The overlong or elongated soft palates in BOAS dogs also commonly reveal excessive thickness, resulting in narrowing and obstruction of the naso-pharynx and oro-pharynx, further contributing to respiratory compromise in affected individuals.

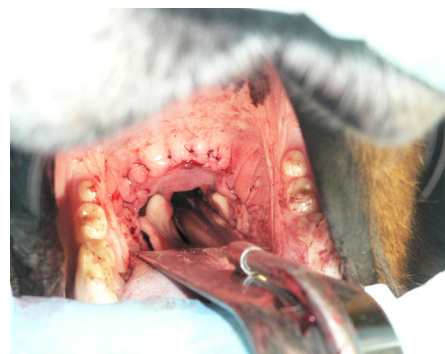
Conventional surgical techniques used for correction of elongated soft palate consist of shortening the length by resection of its caudal aspect (staphylectomy) that obstructs the naso- and oro-pharynx. These traditional techniques address the laryngeal obstruction but are unlikely to achieve significant relief of the naso-pharyngeal and oro-pharyngeal obstructions (DUPRÉ and FINDJI, 2004).

More recently, a new surgical technique has been devised to address and relieve all the components of airway obstruction associated with elongated soft palate. This technique was modified from human surgery and first published by Dupré and Findji in 2004 and subsequently adopted by well-respected surgeons world-wide (Jane Laidlaw, University of Cambridge, Gerhard Ochtering, University of Leipzig, Germany).



Acknowledgement: Fingji L, Dupre G. Vet. Med. Austria / Wien.Tierärztl. Mschr. 95 (2008), 56 - 63

The technique itself consists of subsequent excision of oral soft palate and major part of palatine muscles, folding the caudal-most free edge ventrally and rostrally and its suturing to the pre-determined rostral edge. The suture used is rapidly absorbable (usually polyglecaprone 25), giving the advantage of an enhanced recovery and so dissolving within few weeks.



At Vale Referrals we perform this advanced procedure routinely on all brachycephalic dogs that present with signs of BOAS and elongated soft palate. We find that this is a highly successful procedure with some significant advantages over traditional staphylectomy. The major advantages of this procedure are:

- Easy assessment of the degree of shortening needed for each clinical case
- As well as shortening the palate the procedure enables thinning of the soft palate along its entire length resulting in less oropharyngeal obstruction
- It re-establishes the rigidity of soft palate along its caudal edge and therefore avoids passive movement which can result in stertorous breathing

- The procedure can be used as a salvage or correction surgery for previously performed staphylectomy which has recurred
- No recurrence (as observed following conventional staphylectomy)
- Subjective improvement can be seen almost immediately

By offering more advanced methods for correction of BOAS syndrome, such as folded flap palatoplasty and more radical rhinoplasty we aim to improve the quality of life of severely affected brachycephalic dogs. We understand the complexity of the problem and always tailor the treatment to the individuality of each patient. After physical examination and grading of BOAS (according to Cambridge BOAS study group), each patient undergoes laryngoscopy, pharyngoscopy and rhinoscopy and we tend to recommend the specific procedures based on the results. For more severely affected patients, especially those suffering from alimentary symptoms - we perform gastro-oesophagoscopy and CT of the head chest and stomach - to identify the syndrome in its entirety.

What your client should expect at Vale Referrals:

- Initial consultation - general observation, clinical assessment including functional grading
- General anaesthesia with laryngoscopy, pharyngoscopy and rhinoscopy (indication for surgery)
- BOAS surgery - procedures usually performed:
 - Folded Flap Palatoplasty
 - Tonsilectomy
 - Alar fold resection
 - Trader Rhinoplasty
 - Plus or minus partial laryngectomy (more severe cases with laryngeal collapse)

Advanced procedures such as these are a fixed price at £2500. If you would like an assessment then a consultation is £165.

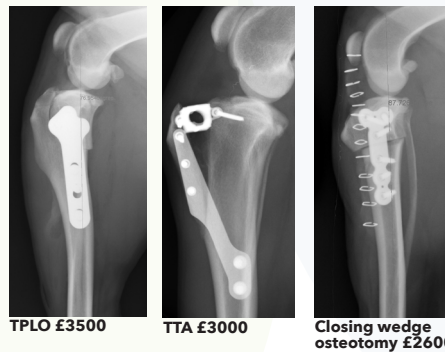
For more information please contact referrals@valevets.co.uk

Fixed price cruciate surgery

At Vale Referrals we are offering fixed price osteotomy techniques (TTA, TPLO and CWO's) for cranial cruciate repair - this includes aftercare and any complications arising directly from the surgery.

We have been performing advanced cruciate surgery (TPLO, TTA, CWO) here at Vale Referrals for the past 10 years with consistent and great results. A recent audit revealed a less than 5% complication rate among our cases, which is consistent with what is described in the literature.

Cruciate rupture is one of the most common orthopaedic conditions seen in our patients at Vale Referrals. Over the last decade the number of options for managing cranial cruciate rupture in dogs has exploded with many techniques being aimed at cases managed in practice. The diagnosis has come with a plethora of potential surgical techniques suggested for repair, ranging from 'lateral suture' through to osteotomy techniques such as TTA, TPLO and CWO. Whilst individually all these techniques all have their merits, they are not without their potential complications. A recent case admitted into Vale Referral has prompted us to highlight and promote the benefits of a consistent approach to

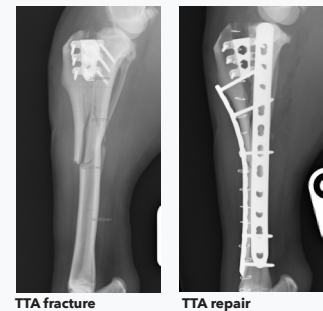


cruciate rupture and consistent approach to advising owners on the complications. We have found that one of the most common challenges and pitfalls that any clinician faces in practice is choosing the right technique that is suitable for the patient. This may be determined by a number of factors such as age, activity, conformation, anatomy, finances, and owners' perception of risks. It is for this reason that we take the approach that one technique does not fit all, and we discuss the merit of each approach in a pragmatic and balanced way.

For more information about our fixed price cruciate repair please contact referrals@valevets.co.uk



Article by
Richard Artingstall
MA VetMB Cert SAS MBA MRCVS



A recent fractured TTA referred into Vale Referrals six days after surgery. Orthogonal plating was used to neutralise the forces, that has resulted in a propagating fracture from the osteotomy site.

As you can see above a simple cruciate case managed within a first opinion clinic can quickly result in extensive surgery to rectify any complications. That is not to say that we do not have or see complications at Vale Referrals, and it is not to say that cases should not be managed in practice, but due to the case load, approach and expertise that we apply to every case, we are proud to back our low complication rate with a fixed price guarantee.

Post Cruciate Surgery Rehabilitation



Article by
Alison Marks
BSc (Hons) Equine Science, Post Grad
Dip A Phys, ESMT, Level 3 Cert HSA



In association with Vale Referrals, Pet Rehab offer a fixed price rehab package for many different conditions including, post cruciate repair surgery rehabilitation. Many dogs that have TPLO, TTA or CWO surgery come to Pet Rehab post-surgery to see our physiotherapists and hydrotherapists. Initially after an assessment we would give the owner some gentle exercises to carry out at home along with an exercise management plan. Dogs would usually then start hydrotherapy as soon as possible to prevent further muscle atrophy, stiffness and habitual gait changes. Hydrotherapy at Pet Rehab is

carried out in an underwater treadmill by a minimum of 2 therapists; 1 in the tank with the dog and 1 outside, this ensures that the dog always has support during their session enabling maximum benefit to be achieved in the optimum conditions. There are many ways a hydrotherapist can support or hold a dog in the underwater treadmill; lateral support to the hips, harness support, dorso-ventral pelvic support, stifle support, lateral shoulder support or placing of the hind limbs. These different support techniques are used depending on how the dog is moving, where or how they are offloading weight, the flight arc or joint ROM of the affected limb.

A long term study by Innes et al showed that significant muscle atrophy remained even one year after cruciate surgery. This indicates the benefits of rehab post surgery.

Another study by Moeller et al. studied the difference in muscle circumference of 29 dogs post TPLO surgery and found significant differences between dogs having rehab and those not having rehab.

There are studies currently being carried out specifically on hydrotherapy and studying how different water heights affect the activation of different muscle groups. (Hartpury College). This may help us improve the quality and effectiveness of rehab post cruciate surgery.

To find out more please call the Pet Rehab team on **01453 519347**.



Easy referral



To help make sending a referral as quick and easy for you as possible, we have an online referral form which also allows you to upload patient history and diagnostic work. You can find this at www.valereferrals.co.uk/online-referral-request-form or find it at the top of the home page.

Once we have received your referral with all the relevant history we will contact your client and arrange their appointment.

CT outpatient requests can also be easily sent to us online. Just head to www.valereferrals.co.uk/CT-request/

How do we rate?

We strive to offer your client the best service and care, we understand that their experience contributes to your reason for choosing us as your referral centre. Vale Referrals send out a client questionnaire following your client's visit and our aim will be to provide you all with a biannual report on the cases we have seen from you.

This will include which disciplines you have referred to, case outcome and how your client found their experience. We will also highlight any feedback where we have had to review and improve our service, to show our passion and dedication for developing and improving our services to you and your client.

What some clients have said about us

Client from Arrowfield Veterinary Practice, Kington says:

"I was particularly pleased that I was contacted post- surgery to let me know how Charlie was doing and again after his overnight stay to put my mind at rest. The team understood the quirkiness of a Jack Russell Terrier, which was very comforting."

Client from Hale Vets says:

"Brilliant professional and friendly service where everything was explained very well in a language I could understand so I could understand the available treatment options. Highly recommended."

Client from Brambles Vets says:

"We are very grateful to Sian for her and the team's treatment of Pumba. Pumba arrived incredibly poorly and we didn't think she would make it but left a couple of days later and is making progress daily. The nursing staff did a great job with her care and physio and we are extremely grateful to have her back home and getting better. Sian is very good with her communication and explaining things clearly and pragmatically, getting the right mix between empathy and explanation. Thank you all."

Cases referred to Vale from September 2018 to March 2019

Ophthalmology	458
Medicine	1892
Dermatology	71
Cardiology	556
Surgery	675
Total Cases	3652

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Please email marketing@valevets.co.uk to be added to the email list.