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Equine Veterinarians Treat Complicated Infectious Disease Case

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Once at the hospital, Dr. Monica Aleman, Krista Estell and Elsbeth Swain, with the Equine Medicine Service, quickly took notice of his symptoms – anorexia, lethargy, fever, diarrhea, colic. All of these are common signs of equine coronavirus (ECoV) infection, a recently discovered contagious disease that has been on the rise in adult horses.

Diagnostic tests confirmed Apache had ECoV, as well as Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae, a bacterial infection causing inflammation of the abdominal lining. The combination of ECoV and pleuritis posed a substantial challenge for the veterinarians. While ECoV does not have a high mortality rate, Apache's case could turn fatal due to its complexity. To make matters worse, Apache had developed gastric reflux, necessitating placement of a nasogastric tube to relieve distension of his stomach.

Because ECoV is highly contagious, Apache was immediately quarantined to the VMTH's isolation unit, a separate facility on the hospital grounds far removed from the hospital and barns. Treatment was initiated, and included IV fluids and anti-inflammatories to treat the ECoV, and antibiotics to treat the pleuritis. After four days, the reflux started to resolve and Apache finally started feeling better. His fever also broke around this time. It appeared he was on the road to recovery. Apache eventually went home after eight days in the isolation unit. His owner kept him isolated and treated for several days. She switched Apache to an alfalfa diet to encourage him to eat during his recovery, and he markedly improved after five days at home. After about two more weeks of recovery, Apache was back to his old self teaching children how to ride.

Finally, I’d like to take a minute to thank some unsung heroes of the VMTH – our laboratory professionals and pathologists. Laboratory Professionals Week was just a few weeks ago, providing us an opportunity to recognize those behind-the-scenes members of our staff who play such a vital role in patient care here at the VMTH. We couldn’t provide such outstanding patient care and teaching without them.

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Kan is the current president of the Sacramento Valley Dental Hygienists’ Association and received the Outstanding Component Member award in 2013. She is active in the California Dental Hygienists’ Association as an appointed member of the Student Relations Council and a voting delegate for the past four years. Kan’s passion for the dental hygiene profession continues to grow, and she has plans to start a Master’s degree program in the near future.

“Thank you for being such a positive influence,” said Dr. W. David Wilson, BVMS, MS, HonDACVIM, Director, William R. Pritchard VMTH.

VMTH’s Blood Bank Always Looking for Donors

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From The Director’s Corner

Welcome to the May issue of VMTH View. It’s hard to believe that summer is almost here and another class of graduates will soon be departing the VMTH and moving on to the next exciting phase of their careers. I want to thank all of you for your hard work, patience and flexibility during this transitional phase of two senior classes in the hospital simultaneously. You have done an excellent job of continuing to offer our clients superb care and service while providing our students with great training opportunities.

As our caseload continues to grow, so must the ranks of our clinicians and staff to maintain continuity in our level of care. We are pleased to introduce some of those new faces in this issue. They, of course, come to the VMTH with impressive backgrounds, and look to take their careers to new heights at UC Davis as they avail themselves of our large and diverse caseload and ample research opportunities. I look forward to following their accomplishments in the coming years.

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“MY prime motivation in joining the DOSS team at UC Davis was the rare opportunity to work in the veterinary field as a dental hygienist,” said Kan. “I look forward to the exciting challenges in terms of applying my knowledge to a whole new patient population. I look forward to learning from everyone at the veterinary hospital, as well as educating students and clients about oral hygiene.”

Kan’s reach at the VMTH will go beyond the DOSS, as she will also provide professional dental hygiene skills and experience to veterinary patients of the hospital’s Outpatient Medicine and Community Medicine Services. Her responsibilities will include providing routine supervised periodontal treatment to UC Davis patients, overseeing the standard of care of periodontal treatment practiced, taking a leading role in hygiene and infection control, assisting in the instruction of veterinary dental procedures in both a clinical and laboratory setting, and assisting in clinical research.

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"Thank you, Elizabeth Bishop, for your positive attitude and very friendly nature. You made everything go smoothly and with a smile on your face."
– Vinny P., Orangevale, California

"Awesome DVMs: Dr. Galuppo, Dr. Trela, Dr. Pusterla, Dr. Henry, and more, as well as fabulous staff including Soli Redfield. The vets and staff have the best customer service. They take time to answer your questions and work to give your animals the best care."
– Anne N., Berkeley, California

"I have so much respect for this vet hospital. They saved my dog’s life. It is my go-to place for serious health issues with my animal family."
– Barbara F., Larkspur, California

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www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/vmth

Dr. Duane Robinson, DVM, PhD, DACVS, joins UC Davis from LSU.

Thanks and Praise from Grateful Clients