



## Intervet Connect Newsletter - Autumn Term 2007

Welcome to the latest edition of the Intervet Connect newsletter for veterinary students.

It's packed with a variety of interesting topics to exercise your mind:

- [Spotlight on Cicada, a survey of infectious diseases experienced by small animal vet practices in the UK](#)
- [A day in the life of a Veterinary Adviser at Intervet UK](#)
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We're also offering students the opportunity to win a funky mouse featuring a moving pet or animal in a prize draw. For your chance to win, please email [support.uk@intervet.com](mailto:support.uk@intervet.com) with 'Intervet Connect mouse offer' in the subject header. Please also state your delivery address in the main body of the email.



I hope you enjoy reading the Intervet Connect Newsletter. Should you have any comments or suggestions for future topics, please e-mail [support.uk@intervet.com](mailto:support.uk@intervet.com).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P Boyden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Paula Boyden**  
**Intervet Connect Co-ordinator**

## SURVEILLANCE SURVEY TRACKS COMPANION ANIMAL DISEASE TRENDS

Recognising the scarcity of disease surveillance data for companion animals, the Cicada survey looks at infectious diseases seen in vet practices and was the brainchild of Intervet working in partnership with the Veterinary Times.



John Helps, veterinary manager at Intervet UK comments: "We have results from a study of practices employing 450 vets nationwide. We plan to continue the survey at intervals so that we can track trends which may occur over time. There have been some surprises!"

Results have revealed that cat owners cannot be complacent in safeguarding their pets from disease. A number of infectious diseases are still widespread and, in some cases, potentially serious. Over three quarters of practices (76%) reported new cases of cat flu in January, with over 50% of practices reporting between two and five cases seen per veterinary surgeon throughout the month. Regional disease hotspots with even higher numbers of cases reported were Belfast, Cornwall, Sussex, South Yorkshire and Surrey.

Dogs are not safe either - canine parvovirus, which causes acute gastroenteritis in dogs and is often fatal, is widespread with more than half of all practices seeing the disease in the last 12 months. Nearly 40% of all the vets questioned reported confirmed and suspected leptospirosis, with 56% of these being in rural practices. If the confirmed serovars are representative of the UK serovar distribution, then practices can rest easy in the knowledge that existing vaccines cover these strains.

French heartworm (*Angiostrongylus vasorum*), once confined to the south west of England and Wales, can now be seen as far north as Durham. Five per cent of practices identified it as an increasing annual problem.

The survey also confirmed that myxomatosis, recognised as a seasonal condition, is now seen all year round with practices diagnosing the disease even in January.

Results are regularly published in the Veterinary Times and Intervet publishes materials for waiting rooms, that highlight the need for vaccination.

## DAY IN THE LIFE OF .....VICKI WINSLET, VETERINARY ADVISER AT INTERVET UK

**Age:** 29

**Occupation:** Veterinary Adviser in the Small Animal Business Unit at Intervet UK

**Hours:** Approximately 40 hours per week

**Qualifications:** BVet Med, MRCVS

**Experience:** Graduated from the RVC in 2002 and worked in mixed and small animal practice



**8.30am:** Arrive at work and make the very important first cup of tea! Then I check my emails and look for any enquiries that have come through from vets and pet owners via our Veterinary Support Group.

**Morning:** My role includes checking that the information we distribute on our products is technically correct. This can be anything from marketing information on specific products to press releases that are sent out to the media. I get involved with designing and writing up clinical trials that Intervet carries out and a large part of my work is supporting the field force with information on our products and giving presentations at practice meetings. I also attend conferences both in the UK and abroad, like BSAVA and ESFM, together with other CPD events.

**Afternoon:** One to two days a week I will be on call to vets needing technical support on products within the Intervet range. When I'm on call I can be speaking to about 20 people a day on anything from diabetic stabilisation to vaccinating skunks. I normally leave work at 5.30pm.

**Evening:** After work I like to play a lot of sport. At the moment kickboxing is a favourite pastime, which vents a lot of aggression and my canoe is sitting in the garage waiting for me to start playing canoe polo again!

**What's the best thing about your job?** No two days are the same and I have lots of opportunities to explore the areas of veterinary medicine that interest me. Working at Intervet has taught me far more about the industry side of things than I would have learnt in practice. The hours and flexibility are also a great advantage!

**And the worst?** It has to be difficult phone calls. It's normally because vets have it very tough at their end with a demanding client as they do come out with the strangest queries! I've learnt to be very tactful on the phone!

**What makes it different?** There is no real clinical work, so it is very different to being in practice. We look to the future of veterinary medicine and are proactive in finding solutions. I also find that I have much more influence and input into new and developing veterinary products than you would have thought possible.

**Any advice to someone wanting to become a veterinary adviser?** After graduation it's advisable to spend a couple of years in practice, as you need to understand a vet's viewpoint. You also need to enjoy communicating and giving presentations.

## STRANGLES WIDESPREAD THROUGHOUT THE UK

As high profile strangles outbreaks continue to hit the UK, a survey carried out by Intervet for Strangles Awareness Week has revealed that a shocking 42 per cent of horse owners were aware of confirmed cases of the disease in their area within the last month, with 50 per cent reporting outbreaks within the preceding three months.



And, with increased openness and communication one of the goals of the recently launched Strangles STEPS (Strategy to Eradicate and Prevent Strangles), Intervet is urging veterinary surgeons to encourage horse owners to report outbreaks of the disease to The British Horse Society. This will help boost communication within the equine community and prevent the disease from spreading unnecessarily. Horse owners agree - nearly 95 per cent of those questioned would like the industry to introduce a standard reporting procedure to help control the disease.

The research also highlighted the need for vets to alert owners to the importance of stable management and hygiene procedures in preventing the disease, with only 42 per cent of yards reporting that they have a policy in place. In addition, educating horse owners about strangles is key with only 40 per cent of horse owners participating in the survey realising that dogs and cats could carry the bacterium which causes the disease, *Streptococcus equi*, on their pads and fur and only a quarter of respondents were aware that the bacterium could live on wood for up to 63 days.

For more information on strangles log on to [www.equine-strangles.co.uk](http://www.equine-strangles.co.uk) and download the Strangles STEPS.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Innovative equine respiratory disease diagnostic service launched**

Intervet has launched an innovative diagnostic service in conjunction with the Animal Health Trust (AHT) - RespCheck - to help quickly and conveniently identify the cause of respiratory problems in horses.

Revolutionising standard protocol following outbreaks of acute respiratory disease, the kit consists of naso pharyngeal swabs, enabling two horses within an outbreak to be swabbed for a variety of diseases. These include equine influenza, equine herpesvirus, *Streptococcus equi* (strangles), *Pasteurella*, rhinovirus and *Streptococcus zooepidemicus*. The swabs will then be sent to the AHT for analysis, free of charge, and the results will be returned direct to the vet.

### **New analgesic and sedative on the market**

A potent and effective short duration analgesic and sedative for horses and dogs containing the synthetic opioid, butorphanol, has been launched by Intervet.

Used as a sedative for minor surgical procedures, in combination with certain  $\alpha_2$  agonists including (me) detomidine and romifidine, the product also provides pain relief for horses with gastrointestinal tract colic a moderate visceral pain in dogs.

### **Intervet launched first veterinary licensed POM-V cimetidine**

Intervet has launched the first veterinary licensed POM-V cimetidine. Formulated specifically for dogs, the product has a new indication for chronic gastritis. With a higher canine bioavailability than human formulations, it also allows for a consistent, reliable low dosing rate and is proven to relieve vomiting by reducing gastric acid by 92.5%.

## WHAT IS INTERVET CONNECT?

### **Background**

The Intervet Connect initiative is a pioneering information and support service which provides veterinary students with educational assistance during their college years. The scheme incorporates a number of benefits, including:

### **Clinical club talks**

Intervet Connect can arrange for one of Intervet's veterinary surgeons to carry out a clinical club evening talk on a range of topics from endocrinology or parasitology to infectious diseases or farm management - and you get free drinks and food!

### **Information requests**

Our Veterinary Support Group is available for students wishing to source up-to-date technical information on either specialist subjects or Intervet products. Information available includes the Compendium of Animal Reproduction, Diabetes Mellitus in Cats and Dogs, Caring for Your Rabbit and the Veterinary Guide to Mastitis.

### **Bursary Award**

Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year, the Intervet Connect Bursary Award helps provide financial assistance for students wishing to undertake elective research over the summer break, both in the UK and abroad.

Students wishing to apply for the 2008 bursary award should contact [support.uk@intervet.com](mailto:support.uk@intervet.com) for further information.

For further information on any subjects featured in this newsletter, please email [support.uk@intervet.com](mailto:support.uk@intervet.com).