Scotties Ages 5 -11 Years Only

Bladder Cancer Noninvasive Screening Test Planned For Sunday, February 18

Scottish Terriers have a 20 times higher risk of developing bladder cancer, i.e. TCC, than dogs in other breeds. At the early stages of cancer, the dog's anti-tumor immune responses are more effective at combatting the cancer.

To address this problem, the Washington State Scottish Terrier Club has been awarded a $1000.00 grant from the Scottish Terrier Club of America's Health Trust Fund to hold a bladder non invasive screening clinic for club members and other Scottie owners in our area.

Dr. Jessica Wilcocks of Evergreen Veterinary Clinic and a technician are donating their time to conduct the clinic. Grant money will be used to cover the cost of building and equipment use.

The screen clinic will be held on:

Sunday, February 18, 2024
Beginning at 10 a.m.
Evergreen Veterinary Hospital
14423 124th Ave NE, Kirkland, WA 98034

Appointments are on a first come, first serve basis beginning at 10:00 a.m. and every 15 minutes after. Scotties must be 5 years of age or older. The screening is ONLY for Scottish Terriers. Participants do NOT need to be members of the WSSTC just owners who have a Scottish Terrier. Contact Cheryl James at CherylJames66@gmail.com to reserve an appointment time. Limited openings.

How Will the testing be conducted.

Scottish Terriers over the age of five years are eligible to participate in the free ultrasound screening program.The ultrasound screening will take about 15 minutes per dog. Similar to an ultrasound screen for breast cancer, the test is NOT conclusive but it is a good initial screening tool. If the ultrasound shows images of bladder tumors, the owner will be given a copy of the ultrasound image and encouraged to get additional screening.

If the ultrasound suggests there may be bladder cancer, it is recommended that further testing be conducted. This includes an urinalysis with sediment exam. If the screening tests were positive or suspicious, then a biopsy was obtained via cystoscopy (right images).

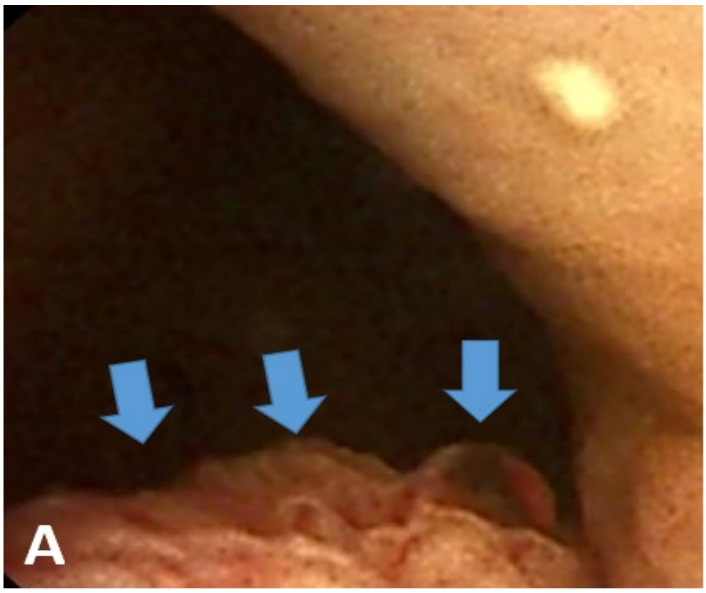
Purdue Professor Deborah Knapp, DVM found that early screening is useful for several reasons:

1. Bladder cancer is usually not detected until it is too late to treat proactively.
2. Dogs with early cancer are in better overall health, allowing them to handle treatment well.
3. At the early stages of cancer, the dog's anti-tumor immune responses are more effective at combatting the cancer. In contrast, in more advanced cancer, the immune system has become exhausted and is ineffective in controlling the cancer
4. The blood flow to the tumor is better in early cancer allowing for good cancer drug delivery, whereas in more advanced cancer, the blood only reaches part of the cancer mass(es)
5. If dogs do not have any cancer-related symptoms at early diagnosis, then even if the tumor is just kept stable, i.e. not necessarily shrinking but not growing, then the dogs will continue to be symptom free.

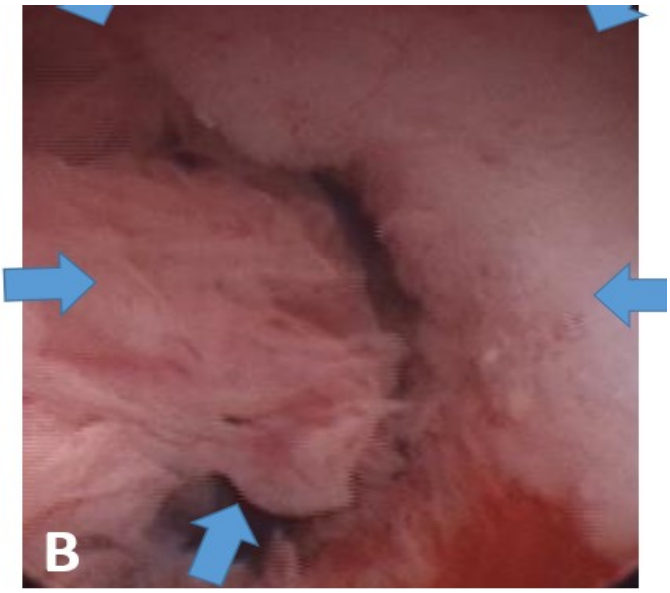
In a three-year study of Scotties, Dr. Knapp found that screening found early cancer in 32 of 120 dogs (27%). And this was when the dogs had no outward evidence of cancer!

Marcia Dawson, DVM and chair of the STCA Health Trust further notes, " This is a great opportunity to put into action what we should all be doing with our Scotties once they reach the age of 5 years: Screen at least yearly for bladder cancer with an ultrasound exam. The earlier we can detect any abnormality in our dogs' bladders, the sooner we can get a diagnosis and start them on more effective therapy. Whichever therapy we choose, from NSAIDS or chemotherapy or alternative medicines and supportive diets, the sooner the better!"

How Can Bladder Cancer Be Detected?



Images of cancer in the bladder seen through a cystoscope in two dogs. The image in **panel A** is of a bladder tumor detected in a Scottie through screening. The tumor is limited to a small area. The cancer detected through screening was much smaller than the cancer not detected through screening.



The image in **panel B** is from a Scottish Terrier that was not in the screening study, and in which the cancer was found after the dog developed urinary accidents in the house and straining to urinate

There are various options for treating bladder cancer in Scotties and prolong the life of one's Scottish Terriers. In a small number of cases, the cancer can go into remission. In other cases, the growth of the tumor may be forestalled. The goal of most treatment protocol's is to prolong the life of the affected Scottie.

Surgery: Unlike many other cancer types, TCC is not typically treated with surgery, given that complete excision often is not possible, and regrowth is common after surgery even when complete excision is performed.

Chemotherapy: If a tumor cannot be surgically removed or if you decline surgery, chemotherapy (as an intravenous injection or as a pill) is another option. This might require weekly hospital visits for three or four weeks. Depending on the protocol, chemotherapy has a 40% to 70% chance of shrinking the tumor or slowing its growth. Chemotherapy helps dogs with bladder cancer for between six and 12 months on average.

Stereotactic Radiation: Stereotactic Radiation is a newer form of treatment for dogs with bladder cancer. This typically requires just 1-3 treatments and has fewer side effects than chemotherapy. A dog that undergoes Stereotactic Radiation may still have blood in its urine as the tumor dies. The dog's skin may also be affected, similar to a sunburn, but that typically will resolve within a couple of weeks. It's also possible that hair will not grow back on the part of the abdomen that was in the radiation field. The dog could have diarrhea for a few weeks from the radiation, as well. This newer treatment aims to damage the tumor without harming surrounding tissues and organs.

Drug treatment: Drugs are also used to treat transitional cell carcinoma in dogs. One such drug is piroxicam (also known by the brand name Feldene), a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) that has anti-cancer properties against TCC in the bladder.

A dog's kidneys must be functioning well before piroxicam can be utilized. In one study, 62 dogs with TCC were treated with piroxicam. In 44 (about 2/3s) of dogs, the tumor either remained stable or decreased in size; the tumor went into remission in two other dogs. Dogs treated with piroxicam survived 195 days on average. In another study, a combination of piroxicam and chemotherapy, a 35% remission rate was achieved. Other non-steroidal drugs such as Rimadyl (Carprofen) may also be used to treat this type of cancer.

No treatment: If the decision is made to not pursue treatment, all of the symptoms can worsen and the dog's appetite may eventually decrease, leading to weight loss. Important to note, however, is that weight loss can occur despite a normal appetite — that is the cancer's affect on the body. Bladder cancer usually progresses in a matter of months and life expectancy does not extend beyond that.