

What if My Dog is Diagnosed with Cancer?

Don't Panic

Many types of cancer can be cured, or put into remission quickly through conventional treatments, including surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. There are many treatment options available—a cancer diagnosis is NOT an automatic death sentence.

Find a Specialist

Veterinary Oncologists specialize in treating animals with cancer and have the ability to provide information about the latest treatment protocols and current clinical trials. To locate a veterinary specialist, visit:

www.acvim.org.

Consult a Holistic Veterinarian

Alternative therapies and nutritional supplements have proven to be an effective way of managing the side effects of conventional cancer treatments and can help to improve your dog's natural abilities to fight against this disease. To locate a holistic veterinarian, visit: www.holisticvetlist.com.

Find Support

A cancer diagnosis frequently provokes anxiety, anger and anticipatory grief. Talking with and learning from other pet owners who have dealt with canine cancer can be very helpful. Georgia's Legacy offers personal online support and can refer to online support resources as well.

About Georgia's Legacy

Georgia's Legacy is a Wisconsin-based group whose mission is to raise awareness of canine cancer and provide information, resource referral and support to those whose lives have been touched by this devastating disease. For more information, visit www.FightCanineCancer.com.

Other Canine Cancer Resources

The Pet Cancer Support Group — A free, online support forum for pet owners who are dealing with canine cancer. Share information, personal experiences and ideas with others who truly understand. Online chats are held on Tuesdays and Fridays. Visit <http://forums.delphiforums.com/petcancer>.

The Magic Bullet Fund — The only organization solely dedicated to providing financial assistance to pet owners who cannot afford cancer treatments for their dog. To learn more, visit www.themagicbulletfund.org.

Help Your Dog Fight Cancer — Georgia's Legacy's Top Pick for books related to canine cancer. A must for any pet parent dealing with canine cancer. To order visit www.helpyourdogfightcancer.com.

WHAT EVERY PET OWNER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CANINE CANCER



Georgia's Legacy



www.FightCanineCancer.com

Education  Information  Support

The Truth About Canine Cancer

Cancer is currently the leading non-accidental cause of death in dogs, and one in three will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime. Despite its prevalence, however, many pet owners don't realize that their dogs are at risk, or have misconceptions about modern cancer treatments for animals. For example, did you know...

- ◆ While older dogs have a much higher risk of developing cancer, dogs as young as a year or less can also get cancer. Cancer strikes all ages, and all breeds. Never ignore early warning signs of cancer and don't accept a "wait and see" approach if you believe something is wrong.
- ◆ Dogs tolerate chemotherapy much better than humans because lower doses are used. Most dogs experience little to no side effects from current chemo protocols and can enjoy a high quality of life throughout treatment.
- ◆ Some breeds are more likely to develop certain types of cancer, such as giant breed dogs and bone cancer. Knowing if your dog's breed has higher incidence of a specific type of cancer can help you to be extra vigilant throughout your dog's life.
- ◆ Research shows that dogs given a diet low in carbs and high in Omega-3 fatty acids (e.g. fish oil) and protein have longer survival times post diagnosis. Special "cancer diets" are available commercially or can be homemade.

10 Warning Signs of Cancer

- ◆ Abnormal swellings that persist or continue to grow
- ◆ Sores that do not heal
- ◆ Unexplained weight loss
- ◆ Loss of appetite
- ◆ Bleeding or discharge from any body opening
- ◆ Offensive odor
- ◆ Difficulty eating or swallowing
- ◆ Hesitation to exercise or loss of stamina
- ◆ Persistent lameness or stiffness
- ◆ Difficulty breathing, urinating, or defecating

**From the American Veterinary Medical Association*

If you notice any of these symptoms in your dog, please consult a veterinarian right away. Early detection is important.

Get to Know Your Dog

Diagnosing cancer in its early stages is critical for the best outcomes, so it's important for you to know your dog well and to be able to recognize what is normal and abnormal for him or her. This means checking regularly for lumps, bumps, skin color changes (be sure to check inside the mouth too), swollen lymph nodes and areas of pain or tenderness. Monthly checks are good, weekly checks are even better. Don't rely on your veterinarian to notice a problem—YOU know your dog best and your dog is counting you to recognize subtle changes that could indicate a problem.



Reducing Your Dog's Risk

While there is no way to *guarantee* that your dog won't develop cancer at some point in their life, there are ways to reduce your dog's risk.

- ◆ Good nutrition and regular exercise are key to a healthy immune system. Feed your dog a high-quality diet that uses human-grade ingredients and little to no preservatives or additives.
- ◆ Reduce your dog's exposure to lawn chemicals and fertilizers, which have been linked to certain types of cancer. Use natural alternatives whenever possible.
- ◆ Limit the use of chemical-based flea and tick products, which are often just pesticides that you apply directly to your dog's skin and which can rub off on you and your family as well. Select natural alternatives as often as possible.
- ◆ Spay and neuter early. Some types of cancer, including mammary cancer, are almost 100% preventable when your dog is spayed or neutered when they are young.
- ◆ Talk with your vet about your dog's vaccination schedule and eliminate those that aren't absolutely necessary. Recent studies show that over-vaccinating can actually damage your dog's immune system and is thought to be a major factor in the development of many chronic diseases, including cancer.
- ◆ ALWAYS wipe your dog's paws off after being outside to prevent them from spreading or licking off any chemical residue from sidewalks, streets and grassy areas.