***Talk with our Vets***

Hi Ken  
  
I couldn’t agree with you more, but I fear that the scientific/medical evidence is thin because of the really stupid study done a decade ago, which gave three cats massive doses of Winstrol (same levels as given to sled dogs) and reported the resulting elevation of liver enzymes. And then, of course, there is the unhelpful connection to the athletic doping scandals. Studies looking into the effects of Winstrol are therefore few and far between (though I have found a few). Moreover, a physician friend of mine explained to me that once a drug is off-patent (as Winstrol is) then the drug companies can make very little money from it, and so they will not spend money to set up clinical trials, and will instead push other related drugs that are still covered by a patent, so they make more money on the sale of those other drugs.  
  
The problem is that, as far as I can determine to date, though there are lots of anabolic steroids, Winstrol is the only one that seems to have this effect on bone marrow to cause it to grow, create new cells, regenerate, etc, which in turn causes the production of red cells, white cells and platelets from the activated bone marrow. In addition, Winstrol is considered to have very mild side effects in comparison to other anabolic steroids. Winstrol is also found to be very quickly effective. Most of those athletes who will speak about steroid use, confirm that Winstrol is one of the most effective and safest of the drugs (and remember that athletes who are using steroids use them at hundreds if not thousands of times the recommended doses, and they "stack" them will all sorts of other steroids).  
  
I also found, with my own vets, that even with solid proof in front of their own eyes (with cats condemned to death, showing an amazing recovery), they will often look for other explanations other than that it was the Winstrol. As I mentioned with my little Zander, after being told by every vet I spoke with that there was nothing I could do and Zander was going to die (and best to put him down immediately), and being able to show serial blood results weekly which showed a clear improvement from critical haematology values to normal results, at the end of it all, I start hearing things like, "well maybe it was never FeLV in the first place".  
  
I agree that the way to start turning this around, for all of us who have had good results or who may have a cat in the unenviable situation of having little or no other options, is to speak with our vets about Winstrol. As I have mentioned in previous posts, I have now used Winstrol, usually in combination with at least the prednisone (with the doxycycline being added on in circumstances involving something likely infectious), for a range of cat problems and have had excellent results every time but once. One case was a 16 year old cat with a nasal sarcoma (kept the sarcoma from causing severe facial swelling, and kept my cat eating for another two years); one case was a cat who came from a feral colony which I later found out had had FIV rampaging through it and killing all the cats (and she came to me EXTREMELY ill with a sky-high fever, tympanic abdomen and fluid around her lungs - she survived when I thought there was no hope at all, and she's still with me now); I have used it to avoid knee surgery for Zander when he pulled his cruciate ligament; and am I currently using it now to treat a spinal lesion in Pippin - a three-year old who gets flair-ups of neurological problems which I tracked to a spinal lesion, and when the lesion causes swelling, etc., the symptoms reappear. The combination of prednisone and Winstrol appears to be the only thing that reverses the effects of the lesion.   
  
I think the Winstrol is seriously underutilized and cats respond very well to it, in a number of circumstances. Obviously, it is not a cure-all, and we've heard from other folks who've tried it and gotten no appreciable results, so I am not suggesting it is a panacea by any means. Further, I understand that FeLV is now thought to be caused by at least four or five different types or strains of virus, and I believe that this is the reason that some people get amazing results and some people see nothing.  
  
Hopefully, Marlene will get a good response, and it is very heartening to hear that in Italy, the drug is commonly used to treat FeLV cats. It was commonly used in North America as well, in the '80's and '90's, until the stupid doping scandals (especially Ben Johnson's Olympic gold medal being stripped) shone an ugly spotlight on it.  
  
Amani

***Article from Foster & Smith on anabolic steroids***

**The Androgen Group-Anabolic Steroids**

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| *Veterinary & Aquatic Services Department, Drs. Foster & Smith* |

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| |  | | --- | | These compounds are related to the male hormone testosterone. They are referred to as the anabolic steroids because they cause the formation of new proteins. As we stated before, they are often abused by athletes trying to increase strength and muscle mass. Their use in canine medicine, while infrequent, is related to these and similar properties.  Anabolic steroids come in liquid forms for injection and tablets for oral administration. Two of the most commonly used in canine medicine are stanozolol (Winstrol-V) and nandrolone (DecaDurabolin).  Animals that have been sick for a long time or who have been through severe, debilitating injuries often have generalized weakness and atrophied muscles. In some, this has progressed to the point where the animals can no longer walk or even stand. Their bodies are just too run down, and without some outside stimulation, they simply may give up the will to live.  Anabolic steroids are sometimes useful in these situations. The therapy may take several weeks. The medications can be most helpful if the veterinarian recognizes the condition before too much strength is lost. Anabolic steroids assist the body in regaining its muscle mass by building new proteins, which are the primary constituent of muscle fibers. Additionally, they help strengthen existing muscles.  In some of these same cases, anabolic steroids are frequently used to stimulate the debilitated or recovering patient's appetite. To achieve this effect usually requires several days to several weeks of therapy for significant changes.  The anabolic steroids are also useful in treating certain types of *anemia*. Anemia is the term used to describe lower than normal numbers of red blood cells (RBCs). In certain cases where the bone marrow has stopped producing new RBCs, administration of anabolic steroids will stimulate this system and bring the number of these cells back to normal levels. They also are known to stimulate the production of *white blood cells* and platelets (tiny cells in blood that assist in clotting) to a lesser degree. In these situations, the anabolic steroids are useful only in increasing the numbers of these cells. *They do not increase the ability of the cells to function*.  Kidney failure often brings on anemia because these organs may fail to produce the substance erythropoietin. Its normal function is to monitor the level of RBCs in the body and to stimulate the bone marrow to increase production when RBC numbers are too low. In its absence, anabolic steroids are often useful in reversing the effects of this anemia. They do not cause new erythropoietin to be produced; they only replace its function.  In many situations, the anabolic steroids fail to provide the benefits described here. Regardless of which particular product is used, it is often impossible to reverse the condition present. These are not miracle drugs that can save every debilitated or severely ill patient, but in some they can help.  As stated, these medications are closely related to testosterone and many of the problems associated with their usage are brought on by the normal actions of the male hormones. They can cause cessation of heat cycles and imitation mounting behavior in females. In males, they have been found to increase the incidence of prostate disease and certain *hernias* and tumors that are caused by normal testosterone levels in older male dogs. Normal sperm production is often disrupted, with few new cells being formed. None of these problems are considered significant in these cases, as many of the patients are already in a life or death situation.  Anabolic steroids also cause water retention and this can cause additional complications in kidney or heart failure patients. These products also increase the absorption of calcium by the intestinal tract and cause the kidneys to retain calcium during normal urine production. Both of these actions lead to excessively high calcium levels in the blood which can be disastrous to normal heart function. This can be quickly fatal in those with already failing hearts.  Copyright © 1997-2017, Foster & Smith, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  Reprinted from PetEducation | |  |  |

***Vets must at least try Winstrol***

Hi Ken...  
I well know the experience of lying with a cat dying of Felv until they passed and these posts are reawakening my own sadnesss and frustration at being able to do so little so late with my own two FelV boys.  It is SO difficult for me to grasp the level of opposition to Winstrol on the part of some vets...  they are surely not worried about law suits and they have a dying cat in front of them that they have NO definitive Tx for....why NOT try Winstrol...  It is beyond absurd...  Unless there is some kind of worry at being fingered for prescibing minute doses of an anabolic steroid (go ahead...take the dose you would give to a cat and see the AMAZING effect is has...  You'll feel nothing....  I can't help but wonder if a lot of vets think if they wipe out the entire population of FeLV cats that they will effectively wipe out the disease (an odd consideration given that there will always BE a "patient Zero"...  it has to start somewhere and likely would again...   Then again...anemia is only one of the complications of this damnable disease (though admittedly the most critical...   They are driving law abiding citizens into illegal activity trying to find alternative sources of a hard to obtain drug in order to save their cats lives.... it's f-in insane!!!There is no end to the irrationality one can encounter when people who are ' supposed ' to be schooled in scientific thinking decide that , that which stands before them....a winstrol treated cat in recovery from anemia must not have had FeLV or there must be an alternative explanation for the recovery....  Everything BUT trying Winstrol on other cats withthe disease and SEEING if it works. . . run you own N of 5 or 6 mini experiment and see if you get a a positive result.... It's not as though you are using alternative medicine on a cancer patient that MIGHT have survived had they had proven Tx...   they have NOTHING to offer us that compares with Winstrol in the clutch (though to date we have only a very few cats who have survived as a result of taking Winstrol and , to my mind, it has not established itself as the de-facto drug for FeLV instigated anemia...but... it is certainly the most hopeful in a field of paltry competitors.....   We all want to live with hope, and Winstrol gives us this....  So Ken, by all means, spread the word, pester, implore, cajole your vet into trying it....but don't be too terribly surprised when you have to figure out how to dismantle the brick wall you are likely to encounter..  
Bob

***Using appetite stimulants***

 Marlene - My Tigger had an active leukemia when I began Winstrol, based on his bloodwork..... and he also was not eating. I gave him an appetite stimulant called Mirtazapine, only a half of a 7.5 mg tablet, every 3rd day, and that boosted his appetite. I also fed him the canned cat food that they sell for after surgeries - it is very calorie dense but I don't remember the name of it. Sometimes I had to clip a towel around him and syringe feed him a little. I did not want to do that because he didn't like having me do that, but I made up my mind that if was going to make it, he had to have some food in him. I believe Amani knows the name of another good appetite stimulant. When he would not drink any water, I gave him clam juice (we called it his kitty cocktail)- he loved it. It is just shameful that Winstrol is not legal for this use - they hold a grudge against it because of the misuse of it by a few athletes. So our kitties have to suffer without the one thing that can help them. It is also important to combine it with the Prednisolone and the Doxycyclene because the Doxy has some property whereby it prevents the virus from replicating. Best of luck with his treatment!!  
  
Ardy

***Winstrol is Stargate in Europe***

Dear all,  
 Good news: Winstrol is legal in Italy for animals and is called stargate. I found a pharmacist who can send it to me in Belgium or I will go to Rome myself on Saturday, he also said it is highly used in Italy for felv cats.  
What is better, pills or injections?   
I thought of pills to cause less stress, but I read it may be more toxic for the liver compared to the injectable one .  
I am also bringing the cat to a French specialised clinic this afternoon just to  get a better opinion than the Belgian one.

Thanks all for your support.  
Best  
 M&M

Marlene,  
  
I should really say that I have never used the injectable form but it is injected intramuscularly and doesn’t last very long, and will be far less convenient to give than the pills. As I mentioned in a previous response, the effect on the liver appears to be transitory and fades after the Winstrol is discontinued. You might consider an initial intramuscular injection by your vet, to give a quick boost to baseline, and then continuing with daily pills.  
  
I am also THRILLED to hear that Winstrol is used regularly in Itally for FeLV. Finally, SOMEWHERE that is using a medication that actually shows some promise against this hideous virus, and doesn’t appear to be swayed by the highly irrelevant athletic doping scandals!  
  
Good luck Marlene and keep us posted.  
  
Amani