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VISCUM ALBUM AS A TREATMENT FOR LIVER NEOPLASM IN DOGS

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ABSTRACT

Homeopathy is an ancient treatment, which treats the individual as a whole, and not just the disease, and its principle is to bring energy that tunes the entire body and its imbalance can generate numerous pathologies. Cancer is a chronic and extremely complex pathology, which requires continuous monitoring and specific treatment with the aim of controlling changes and cell multiplication. Cancer treatment is most often chemotherapy, which has several side effects and can last months or years, overloading the functions of vital organs such as the liver, kidneys and heart. Homeopathy is used as an associated or isolated treatment option, with the aim of improving the patient's immunity, killing cancer cells only and reducing side effects of chemotherapy when combined. Viscum Album is a homeopathic medicine that has antineoplastic, anti-inflammatory and immunity-boosting effects, with the subcutaneous injectable form being the safest way and with scientifically proven results. As a treatment, a protocol was carried out with associated strengths of Viscum Album for three months subcutaneously, with a new abdominal ultrasound examination being carried out to monitor and monitor the Hepatocellular Carcinoma nodules, resulting in complete resolution. It is concluded that homeopathy is a safe option for cancer treatment, as long as it is carried out by a homeopathic veterinary medical professional.

Keywords: Neoplasm. Carcinoma. Viscum Album.

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INTRODUCTION

The age of affected animals varies from seven to fifteen years, with an average of ten years[5], with males being more susceptible to developing this disease[5].

On physical examination, it is common to detect a cranial abdominal mass or evident hepatomegaly[5], depending on the species and evolution of the disease, anorexia, lethargy, weight loss, polydipsia, polyuria, vomiting and abdominal distension may occur[5]. As a consequence of liver dysfunction and failure, animals may present cholestasis and jaundice, hepatic encephalopathy, metabolic, vascular and hemodynamic changes and photosensitization in herbivores[9].

Ultrasonography often reveals focal, multifocal, or diffuse changes in hepatic echogenicity. Hepatocellular carcinoma generally resembles a focal hyperechoic mass, which may be hypoechoic depending on the stage[5].

Definitive diagnosis requires obtaining liver samples via biopsy and histopathological evaluation[6]. This can be done through a laparotomy, where there is a large and single tumor mass, as the excision of the mass can be done simultaneously[6]. Ultrasound-guided biopsy is useful in diagnosing focal or diffuse liver involvement, but the small sample size can make it difficult to differentiate between different neoplasms, and a sample obtained by wedge biopsy during surgery is generally necessary[5,6].

In small animals, in most cases, no chemotherapy is effective for the treatment of hepatocellular carcinoma[5]. Surgical removal of the affected liver lobe is the most effective treatment[5]. Post-operatively, the aim is to evaluate possible hemorrhages through ultrasound monitoring, blood pressure monitoring, fluid or even blood replacement if necessary, in addition to the use of antibiotics, analgesics and anti-inflammatories[5].

CASE REPORT

Canine patient, French Bulldog, 10 years old, was referred to the dermatology sector of a veterinary hospital due to otitis and the presence of nodules in the liver, an abdominal ultrasound examination was carried out in July 2024 showing nodular structures in the liver and the cytology examination confirmed hepatocellular carcinoma. At the time, the patient was not stable enough to undergo a surgical procedure and the owner opted for a less invasive treatment.

A treatment with injectable homeopathic Viscum album was indicated, using combinations of powers D3, D6, D9, D12, D30, D2 and 200 CH, subcutaneously and

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applied to the VG14 acupuncture point, which is an immunity stimulation point, being then pharmacopuncture was performed. The applications were carried out from Monday to Saturday at home, being applied by the owner himself with prior guidance from the veterinarian.

The treatment protocol was prescribed for three months, with a new abdominal ultrasound examination being repeated to control the neoplasia in October 2024, and in this new examination there were no more nodular structures in the liver, and with this the patient was considered in remission of the disease, from this date onwards for follow-up every three months.

After this period, cytology was repeated using an ultrasound-guided puncture technique and no tumor cells were found. As a result, the patient is in complete remission, has had no side effects from homeopathic treatment and is still being monitored.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The patient was beginning to show systemic signs such as apathy, reduced appetite and changes in liver enzymes, and the owner had no prospect of improving his animal's quality of life or treatment options that were not aggressive, and it was at this point that the Integrative medicine comes in as a way of treating the patient as a whole, without generating side effects[1].

Viscum album is a semiparasitic plant, from the Loranthaceae family, that grows on different host trees from northern Europe to northwest Africa[1]. This plant contains several biologically active compounds, known as mistletoe extracts, which eliminate cancer cells in vitro and stimulate the immune system in vivo[1]. It is an anthroposophic medicine used for cancer, multi-systemic diseases and hepatitis C already reported in the literature[1]. It can be applied subcutaneously, and the company in Brazil responsible for the injectable commercial presentation is INJECT CENTER, being used for numerous veterinary oncology treatment protocols[3].

When Viscum album is administered subcutaneously or intravenously, the majority of lectins bind to transmembrane glycoproteins and thus do not cause a toxic effect[3]. Viscotoxins interact with the phospholipid phosphatidylserine (FFA) in the cell membrane, altering its composition[3]. This effect is more pronounced in tumor cells, as they exhibit greater amounts of FFA and, therefore, are more sensitive to this action[3]. In this way,

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Viscum acts only on tumor cells, acting to promote cytoreduction and in the case reported, the elimination of the neoplasm and improving the patient's quality of life[3] (figure 1 and 2).

The option of applying the medicine to the acupuncture point VG14 (Governor Vessel 14), which is located in the depression of the dorsal midline, between the seventh cervical vertebra and the first thoracic vertebra, in the cranial direction to the highest point of the inter-scapular, is due to its stimulating effect on the immune system, and is also indicated for pathologies involving clinical signs such as: cervical diseases, disorders of the thoracic spine and pelvic limbs, fever, heatstroke, anhidrosis, asthma, cough, cold, eczema and convulsions[7].

Surgical intervention is important to improve the animal's quality of life and increase survival, however when this possibility does not exist, as in the case reported, the association with traditional methods of Chinese medicine with Viscum album, acupuncture in integration with pharmacopuncture, has presented significant results[8]. These treatment techniques are increasingly being used in animals with neoplasms in order to minimize side effects when compared to conventional treatment[8].

Figure 1 - Result and ultrasound image before treatment with injectable Viscum album.

ULTRASSONOGRAFIA ABDOMINAL

***FÍGADO**: Fígado com dimensões aumentadas, contornos regulares, bordas finas, ecogenicidade mista, ecotextura heterogênea com presença de algumas estruturas nodulares hipoecogênicas em parênquima medindo aproximadamente 0,96 cm x 0,67 cm.*

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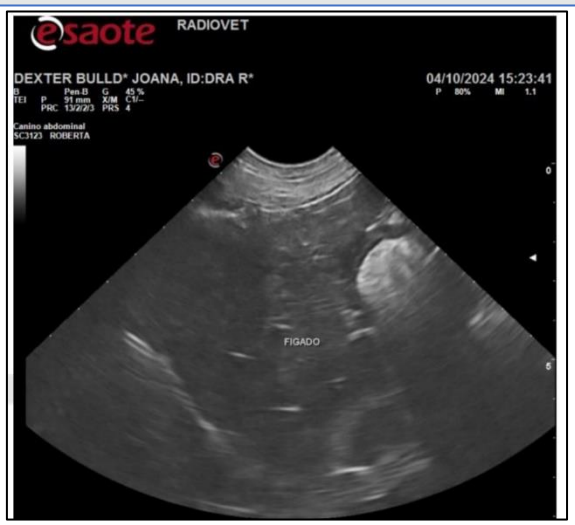
Figure 2 - Result and ultrasound image after 3 months of treatment with injectable Viscum album.

ULTRASSONOGRAFIA ABDOMINAL

***FÍGADO**: Fígado com dimensões aumentadas, contornos regulares, ecogenicidade aumentada, ecotextura heterogênea.*



CONCLUSION

It is known that hepatocellular carcinomas are malignant, highly aggressive neoplasms that can affect dogs, however homeopathy is a safe option, without side effects and easy to apply, being indicated mainly in patients who cannot undergo surgery or who are undergoing oncological chemotherapy treatment without responses and with side effects that make treatment progress difficult. Furthermore, integrative and oncological monitoring of these patients is mandatory for the success of the treatment and the patient's quality of life.

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