



This case highlights the need to consider leishmaniosis as a cause of skin disease in UK dogs even if no travel history is apparent

PARASITOLOGY

Possible vertical transmission of *Leishmania* in a dog

ESCCAP UK & Ireland has been alerted to a further case of leishmaniosis in a dog that had not travelled outside of the UK.

A seven-year-old male neutered husky was brought to Westway veterinary practice in Consett, County Durham, two days after being rehomed by Siberian Husky rescue. It was in good body condition, but a focal patch of dermatitis had been noticed on the fourth digit of the left forelimb. Two discharging tracts were present in the digit with associated swelling.

The dog was treated with amoxicillin/clavulanate and meloxicam and the lesion subsequently resolved. Two weeks after the initial presentation two further bleeding swollen lesions developed on the fifth digits of both hindlegs. These responded to topical treatment (betamethasone and fusidic acid) and a repeated course of antibiotics. The right lesion healed quickly but the left took longer to resolve. The lesion was biopsied as a precaution and *Leishmania* amastigotes were identified.

The dog had never travelled outside of the UK but had lived for a time

with a dog imported from France, presenting the possibility of direct transmission. However, it is more likely that it was infected through vertical transmission.

Its father was imported from Italy, raising the possibility that the mother was infected venereally, resulting in subsequent vertical transmission.

This case highlights the need to consider leishmaniosis as a cause of skin disease in UK dogs even if no travel history is apparent. It also highlights the importance of not breeding dogs imported from countries where *Leishmania infantum* is endemic unless they have been rigorously tested for infection.

Venereal and congenital transmission, alongside blood transfusion, remain the most likely routes by which *L. infantum* might become more widely established in the UK without the need for the sand fly vector.

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