Preface

Emergency Medicine

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Guest Editor

This edition of Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice is primarily focused on the some of the more common and practical topics useful to clinicians who might see emergencies. Hence, I think it is helpful for any practicing small animal clinician. The authors of the various articles are experts in small animal emergency and critical care and are individuals who are on the clinic floor practicing what they preach. Other than just being experts, these are practical people who can provide information that is easily applied to the clinical patient. The first article, “Global assessment of the emergency patient,” provides a comprehensive discussion on the physical assessment of the critically ill patient. Dr. Aldrich leaves no stone unturned and provides the most thorough article on this topic that I have ever read. The next four articles deal with the four major body systems that critical care clinicians initially focus on when dealing with unstable animals. Drs. Rozanski and Chan provide an excellent overview of how to assess and treat respiratory distress in the dog or cat. The third article by Drs. Boag and Hughes from the Royal Veterinary College is on perfusion abnormalities and is one of the most insightful reviews that I have read on this topic. Dr. Syring’s article on central nervous system abnormalities follows, and her expertise and interest in this topic are clearly reflected in her presentation. To round out these articles, Dr. Rieser’s review of urinary tract emergencies is extremely beneficial to any practitioner.

These first articles are followed by others on specific topics that are quite pertinent to the practicing clinician. The articles on acute abdomen and...
reproductive emergencies by Drs. Beal and Jukowitz, respectively, are extremely useful and thoroughly referenced. Dr. McMichael provides extremely useful information on the rarely covered topic of pediatric emergencies. Providing anesthesia is generally quite stressful for any practitioner, but giving anesthesia to the emergency patient is “giving insult to injury,” so to speak. Dr. Campbell’s presentation on anesthesia is a great reference for common anesthetic protocols used in emergency practice. Most people do not feel comfortable dealing with ophthalmic problems, but Drs. Mandell and Holt provide information that should alleviate some of that discomfort in handling ophthalmic emergencies. These days, any text regarding clinical veterinary medicine needs to include information on relieving pain in animals. Such needs are essential in traumatized patients. I was extremely lucky to have Drs. Mathews and Dyson provide an article on pain management in the emergency patient. Finally, but certainly not least, Drs. Hackett and Lehman give us a practical and philosophic discussion on the complexity of emergency drug therapy in critically ill animals.

I am extremely pleased with all the articles in this issue. I believe these individuals hit the mark in providing useful state-of-the-art information on common issues in emergency medicine. I hope you will enjoy it as well and that it never gathers dust on your bookshelf.

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