

Letters to the Editor

Updated information for treatment of fungal infections in cats and dogs

Since our article, "Use of lufenuron for treating fungal infections of dogs and cats: 297 cases (1997-1999)" was published in the *JAVMA* (Nov 15, 2000, pp 1510-1513), numerous veterinarians throughout the world have contacted us. Many of them have used lufenuron to treat animals with fungal infections and have shared their experiences and comments with us. It seems that there are many catteries and cat shelters in the United States with serious dermatophyte problems. Our article dealt with a population of house cats. Whenever and wherever house cats were involved, full success was achieved with the described dosages. Catteries are a completely different scenario, however, because dermatophyte spores are ubiquitous, they have high population density, and many of the cats have multiple health problems, including infections with feline immunodeficiency and feline leukemia viruses. The latter cats are cured more slowly, and we have had reports that treatment with lufenuron at the low dose of about 52 mg/kg (23.6 mg/lb) of body weight, per os, has failed. Many US veterinarians have reported a high success rate in catteries when they administered the contents of a tube containing 260 mg of lufenuron instead of 130 mg. In Israel, we have also been successful recently with this dosage in cats with multiple health problems residing in catteries.

On the basis of feedback and our experiences, our current recommendations are given here. For cats in a cattery, the minimum dose should be 100 mg lufenuron/kg, per os.

The entire cattery population should be treated at the same time, because most apparently healthy cats are carriers. Also, environmental treatment against the spreading

spores should be considered. To protect the cats from future recurrence of the disease, monthly oral administration of 130 mg of lufenuron (as for flea control) may be considered. There are no reported adverse effects; therefore, we recommend giving house cats not less than 80 mg/kg (36 mg/lb). Lufenuron must be given with a full meal to be effective for both cats and dogs. For "free-fed" cats, it is necessary to withhold food and postpone administration until an entire meal has been consumed. In dogs, we need not be concerned with overdose toxicosis. Therefore, to avoid dividing tablets, the minimum recommended dose is 80 mg/kg (36 mg/lb). Approximately 5% of treated cats and dogs became reinfected; therefore, a second treatment at the same dose should be considered two weeks after the first treatment. Continue with a maintenance dose used for flea control for several months.

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