Ciliary body tumor in a dog

Dear OncoLink "Ask The Experts,"

My dog is only 4 years old. I have learned that my dog has an "epithelial tumor of the ciliary body" in the eye itself, a "ciliary adenocarcinoma". I am concerned about metastatic rate for this type of tumor, and the recommended best way to monitor on a continuing or long-term basis. My local vet suggested a chest x-ray. Any suggestions or information would be greatly appreciated, as I want to be informed and proactive.

Lili Duda, VMD, Section Editor of the OncoLink Veterinary Oncology Menu, responds:

The ciliary body is a structure that sits within the eye just behind the iris. It is responsible for producing the fluids that nourish the eye, as well as containing muscles that allow the lens to focus.

Primary tumors of the ciliary body are uncommon in dogs, and even less common in cats. They tend to occur in middle-age to older animals. Because these tumors are uncommon, there is a limited amount of information in the veterinary medical literature. However, metastasis of ciliary body adenocarcinomas seems to be uncommon, and tends to happen as the tumor gradually becomes larger and more invasive. If the tumor was not invading through the surface of the globe of the eye at the time it was removed, both metastasis and recurrence of the tumor locally is unlikely. The draining lymph nodes and the lungs should be periodically evaluated for tumor spread by physical examination of the lymph nodes, fine needle aspiration if abnormalities (such as increased size or firmness) are detected, and chest X-rays.

If you or your veterinarian have not already done so, please consult a qualified veterinary oncologist to further explore the treatment options for your pet.

Lili Duda, VMD
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