Letters to the Editor

Excision arthroplasty of the hip joint in dogs and cats

Dear Sir,

I would like to offer some comments on the recent article “Excision arthroplasty of the hip joint in dogs and cats” by W. Off and U. Matis. Although I cannot criticise the results of this report, and have the utmost respect for my good friend Prof. Matis, I have a different slant on the conclusions.

I have made these comments for 45 years, since my first report of my early cases. The thing about this procedure that seems to elude many is that it is a ‘quality of life’ procedure that needs to be evaluated by other than objective measurements. Of course there is measurable loss of function, but that is not the question that should be asked. Rather, it should be whether the animal leads a pain free life of moderate activity and is a satisfactory pet. If these criteria are used the results are virtually always positive. Rather than concluding that the efficacy of this surgical treatment should not be determined by a questionnaire, in this situation that is exactly what should be evaluated. There are relatively few clients who can consider total hip replacement based purely on economic considerations. Without excision arthroplasty many of these pets would be euthanatized. Some loss of function is a minor issue for these owners. I have never regretted performing this procedure, even on giant breeds, as long as the owner is well educated about the procedure and expected long-term function.

Keep up the good work. I continue to enjoy the journal, even in retirement, as it is marvelous to see the progress we have made over the course of my career.

Best regards,

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References

1. Off W, Matis U. Excision arthroplasty of the hip joint in dogs and cats. Clinical, radiographic, and gait analysis findings from the Department of Surgery, Veterinary Faculty of the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, Germany. Vet Comp Orthop Traumatol 2010; 23: 297-305.