



## Immune Mediated Problems and Vaccinations in Weimaraners

A small percentage of Weimaraner puppies exhibit a syndrome following vaccination or other forms of stress. This syndrome can include one or more of the following symptoms: Hypertrophic Osteodystrophy (swollen and painful joints), Elevated WBC, Elevated temperature, Diarrhea, Lethargy, or Depression, Lymph node enlargement, Pain to touch.

One of the theories to explain this syndrome is the mechanism that shuts off the antigen/antibody response fails to work properly. Most of the problems seen have been in puppies between 12-14 weeks of age. This is the age that maternal antibodies are declining and the immune system is vulnerable to vaccines. The Distemper vaccine has been isolated in the joint fluid of puppies with this condition.

Dr John Angles, University of Dublin Vet. School, Dublin, Ireland and Dr. Niels Pederson, U.C. Davis Vet. School, Davis, Ca. are currently involved in research for this problem funded by the AKC Canine Health Foundation and the Weimaraner Club of America. The ultimate goal is to identify DNA markers for this syndrome.

The recommended treatment is intravenous steroids (dexamethasone) at a loading dose of 0.1-0.5 mg/kg followed by oral prednisone or prednisolone at a dose of 2 mg/kg divided into twice a day dose for one week and then tapered over the next 3-5 weeks to 0.5mg/kg every other day. This treatment reduces the immediate inflammatory response and suppresses the overreacting immune system.

The recommended treatment should be started IMMEDIATELY upon diagnosis. This usually results in rapid recovery. Dr. Angles has found those puppies not treated immediately take LONGER TO RESPOND and a small percentage DO NOT RECOVER.

Although many puppies can be vaccinated with the combination MLV vaccines, there is no way to determine which pups will adversely react. It is recommended that the High Titer Parvo vaccine, which protects with 2 vaccinations be used.

Lyme, Bordetella, and Corona vaccines are NOT recommended unless endemic infection of these diseases are in the area. These should NEVER BE GIVEN IN COMBINATION WITH OTHER VACCINES!!!!

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