



media *release*

Monday 15 February 2016

WARNING FOR DOG OWNERS: SOME IMPORTED JERKY TREATS MAY CAUSE KIDNEY DYSFUNCTION. KNOW WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR.

Vets across the UK have reported seeing an increased number of dogs presenting with kidney problems which may be linked to the ingestion of imported dried jerky treats.

The dogs have shown a decreased appetite, increased thirst and increased need to urinate. Many of these dogs had been fed dried jerky type dog treats, specifically chicken or duck. While a cause is unknown, all the treats were identified as originating from China.

The clinical signs (tiredness, decreased appetite, increased thirst, and increased need to urinate) are vague and non-specific but blood and urine testing are indicative of a rare kidney disorder, and include a higher than normal glucose level in the urine, together with a normal blood glucose level. Other possible causes for the presence of glucose in the urine, such as diabetes, kidney infections or leptospirosis were excluded.

Dog owners are advised to make an appointment with their vet where they have noticed any of these clinical signs in their dog and are feeding him or her jerky treats which are suspected to be imported.

This syndrome has previously been reported in Australia and the USA, as well as in smaller numbers in the UK and Europe, in association with the ingestion of dried jerky treats. **Currently, no specific toxin has been identified as the cause.**

Mellora Sharman, Internal Medicine Clinician at the Animal Health Trust, said:

“If you are in any doubt about feeding jerky treats to your dog, double check the country of origin on the packaging. The important thing is that most dogs respond well if the treats are removed from their diet promptly after noticing the clinical signs: increased thirst, loss of appetite and increased need to urinate.

“Some dogs may require hospitalisation and supportive medication but the more extreme cases of this syndrome so far appear to be less common in the UK. If you are currently feeding these types of treats to your pet and have any concerns, you should make an appointment with your vet and take the packaging of any treats with you to discuss in the consultation.

“This problem has been reported previously in America and Australia since 2007, as well as in the UK. It’s impossible to say what the cause of the syndrome is at this stage, as nothing has been proven yet. Several possible causes have been explored, such as the presence of salmonella, pesticides, glycerin, antivirals and level of irradiation in the treats, but none of these have been confirmed to be linked to the illness in dogs so far.”

More information on this syndrome in America and the steps taken so far to investigate the cause can be found on the U.S Food and Drug Administration website: www.fda.gov by searching ‘jerky treats’ on the website.

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For further information, please contact:

Katherine Lawson, AHT press office, 01638 751000 ext 1511 or 07341 737 746

Photographs & Videos:

Images can be requested from the AHT press office.

Additional notes:

- The Animal Health Trust (AHT) is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets. Visit the website at www.aht.org.uk