

(April 16, 2009 Stillwater, OK) – During a recent Pet Care Seminar, Mark Neer, DVM, ACVIM, shared the following information about epilepsy in pets:

- The word epilepsy simply refers to repeating seizures and the seizures could have many different causes; when the cause is unknown, it is then referred to as idiopathic epilepsy
 - Up to 4 percent of all dogs (14 percent in some breeds/families of dogs) experience epilepsy
 - Epilepsy can occur in cats but the frequency is estimated at less than 2 percent
 - Epilepsy is inherited in some breeds including: Beagles, Keeshonds, German Shepherds, Belgian Tervurens, Dachshunds, and Belgian Sheepdogs
 - Other disorders that might mimic seizures would be: fainting spells called syncope, obsessive compulsive disorders, REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, or inner ear problems
 - Sometimes unusual behavior/activity can follow a seizure lasting from 30 minutes to several hours such as: apparent blindness, disorientation, eating/drinking excessively, nervousness, aggression, pacing, hiding, and seeking affection
 - Dogs do not feel any pain during a seizure and do not even know it is occurring
 - When a dog is having a seizure, there is nothing you can do to help and handling the animal may risk injury to yourself or family member; time the seizure and record the dog's activity following the seizure
 - Frequent seizures, which are close together and for which the dog never recovers fully prior to the onset of another seizure, are called status epilepticus. This is an emergency situation and the owner should seek veterinary attention immediately for the dog.

If your pet has seizures, consult your veterinarian to discuss an individualized treatment plan that best fits your pet's healthcare needs. Be sure to schedule and keep regular checkups with your veterinarian to ensure the safety and health of your pet.

The Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences is one of 28 veterinary colleges in the United States and is fully accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association. The center's Boren Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital is open to the public and provides routine and specialized care for small and large animals. It also offers 24 hour emergency care and is certified by the American Animal Hospital Association. For more information, visit www.cvhs.okstate.edu or call (405) 744-7000.

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