Canine Cancer: FDA approves Palladia

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

First canine cancer drug:
PALLADIA

In June, 2009, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced the approval of Palladia (toceranib phosphate), the first drug developed specifically for the treatment of cancer in dogs. Palladia is approved to treat canine cutaneous (skin-based) mast cell tumors, a type of cancer responsible for about 1 out of 5 cases of canine skin tumors.

While canine mast cell tumors often appear small and somewhat insignificant, they can be a very serious form of cancer in the dog. Some mast cell tumors are easily removed without the development of any further problems and others can lead to a life-threatening disease as the tumors spread through the body. Proper identification and treatment are very important in controlling these tumors.

Mast cells are cells that normally occur in the skin and other tissues, such as the intestines and respiratory tract. They are part of the immune system (defense mechanism) of the body. They contain large amounts of histamine, heparin, and proteolytic enzymes (enzymes which break down protein). These can be toxic to foreign invaders, such as parasites, and are released when the mast cell is triggered by the immune system.

Palladia

Palladia is a potent anti-cancer drug in tablet form that works by killing tumor cells and cutting off blood supply to the tumor. It may be used in conjunction with other treatments such as surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation therapy. Regular veterinary exams will be necessary for dogs taking Palladia to monitor its effectiveness and any side effects. As with any anti-cancer therapy, it is not possible to predict which dogs will respond to Palladia and for how long.
Palladia is slated for release in 2010.

A mast cell tumor consists of large numbers of abnormal mast cells.

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