Comparative assessment of the palatability of a new renal diet in fussy canine eaters

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Introduction

Feeding an appropriate diet is the cornerstone of the management of dogs suffering from chronic kidney disease (CKD). Dysorexia is frequent in these patients(1). That is why "renal diets" need to be highly palatable. Most palatability studies are conducted in research centres, in healthy animals trained for palatability testing(2).

Diet A	VETERINARY HPM Kidney Support dog from Virbac
Diet B	Royal Canin® Veterinary Exclusive Canine Renal
Diet C	Hill's Prescription Diet™ k/d™ Canine Kidney Care

Fig. 1: Tested Diets

The aim of this study was to compare the palatability of a new dry renal diet (diet A, figure 1) to that of two commercial renal diets (diets B and C) in fussy client-owned dogs, to mimic the CKD patients' difficult appetite.

Animals, materials and methods

52 adult [5-14 years old] dogs described as "fussy eaters" by their owners were followed up for six weeks. During the first 4 weeks, after a 4-day diet transition, they were fed exclusively diet A, as described on figure 2. Then the dogs received either diet B (n=27) or diet C (n=25) for 14 other days, after a new 4-day diet transition. For each diet, palatability was evaluated by the owners at the end of each 4-day diet transition (D4) and at D7 and D14, and additionally at D28 for diet A. Fisher's exact test was performed for the statistical analysis.

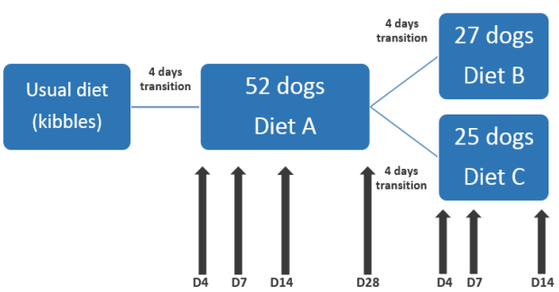

Fig. 2: Study design

Results

At D4, no statistical differences were observed between the three diets. Compared to their usual diet, more dogs preferred the new diet when testing diet A as opposed to diet B at D7 and D14, and to diet C at D14 (see figure 3). According to the owners, diet A was the most satisfactory compared to diet B at D7 and D14 and also to diet C at D14.

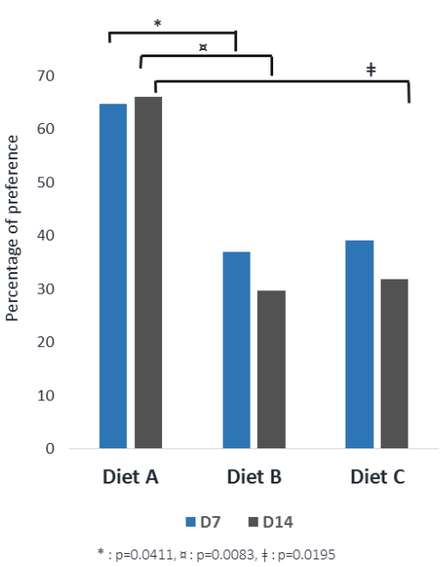

Fig. 3: Preference for the tested compared to the usual diet at D7 and D14

Conclusion

These results demonstrated the good palatability of this new diet, even in fussy dogs. This may explain the high owner satisfaction rate.

References: 1/ Dethioux F. 800 000, 799 999, 799 998… the lethal countdown. Vets today 2013; 17. 2/ Aldrich GC, Koppel K. Pet food palatability evaluation: a review of standard assay techniques and interpretation of results with primary focus on limitations. Animals 2015; 5:43-55