Communication Training: Theory, Application, Review, & Repeat

Communication skills have become more prominent in veterinary education. Communication education has evolved from lecture to role play to a combination of the two with videotaping of client interaction and professional feedback. The more time and training are invested in this area, the more likely clients will be satisfied and appropriately comply with medical advice. In addition, more than half of human medical graduates view this training approach as ultimately useful.

In this study, veterinary students with induction coursework in client communication were videotaped with a client while on community practice rotation. At a follow-up session with a behavioral scientist trained in veterinary client issues, the students identified 3 goals for improvement. They were then recorded a second time and given feedback targeted at their goals. As a result, the students showed significant improvement in questioning the client and using appropriate nonverbal communication, discussing clinical results, and ensuring compliance with proper discharge discussion. The groups with the most communication training fared best, demonstrating that investment in communication training leads to improved client perception of appointments and improved potential for compliance.


CHEWABLES

CAUTION: Federal (U.S.A.) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS: For use in dogs to prevent canine heartworm disease by eliminating the tissue-stage of heartworm larvae (Dirofilaria immitis) or for a month (30 days) after infection and for the treatment and control of ascariids (Toxascaris canis, Toxocara canis and hookworms [Ancylostoma caninum, Uncinaria stenocephala, Ancylostoma braziliense]).

DOSEAGE: HEARTGARD® Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) should be administered orally at monthly intervals at the recommended minimum dose level of 6 mg/kg of pyrantel per kilogram (2.72 mg/lb) and 5 mg of pyrantel (as pamoate salt) per kg (2.77 mg/lb) of body weight. The recommended dosing schedule for prevention of canine heartworm disease and for the treatment and control of ascariids and hookworms is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dog Weight</th>
<th>Chewables Per Month</th>
<th>Pyrantel Content</th>
<th>Color Coding on Foil Backing and Carton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 25 lb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66 mcg</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 50 lb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>136 mcg</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 100 lb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>272 mcg</td>
<td>Brown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HEARTGARD® Plus is recommended for dogs 6 weeks of age and older. For dogs over 100 lb use the appropriate combination of these chewables.

ADMINISTRATION: Remove only one chewable at a time from the foil-backed blister card. Return the card with the remaining chewables to its box to protect the product from light. Because most dogs like HEARTGARD® Plus palatable, the product can be offered to the dog by hand. Alternatively, it may be added intact to a small amount of dog food. The chewable should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole.

Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes after administration to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

HEARTGARD® Plus should be given at monthly intervals during the period of the year when mosquitoes (vectors) potentially carrying infective heartworm larvae, are active. The initial dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog’s first exposure to mosquitoes. The final dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog’s last exposure to mosquitoes.

When replacing another heartworm preventive product in a heartworm disease preventive program, the first dose of HEARTGARD® Plus must be given within a month (30 days) of the last dose of the former medication. If the interval between doses exceeds a month (30 days), the efficacy of ivermectin can be reduced. Therefore, for optimal performance, the chewable must be given once a month on or about the same day of the month. If treatment is delayed, whether by a few days or many, immediate treatment with HEARTGARD® Plus and resumption of the recommended dosing regimen will minimize the opportunity for the development of adult heartworms.

Monthly treatment with HEARTGARD® Plus also provides effective treatment and control of ascariids (Toxascaris leonina) and hookworms (Ancylostoma caninum, Uncinaria stenocephala, Ancylostoma braziliense). Clients should be advised of measures to be taken to prevent reinfection with intestinal parasites.

EFFICACY: HEARTGARD® Plus Chewables, when orally utilized using the recommended dose and regimen, are effective against the tissue larval stage of Dirofilaria immitis for a month (30 days) after infection and, as a result, prevent the development of the adult stage. HEARTGARD® Plus Chewables are also effective against canine ascariids (Toxascaris leonina) and hookworms (Ancylostoma caninum, Uncinaria stenocephala, Ancylostoma braziliense).

ACCEPTABILITY: In acceptability and field trials, HEARTGARD® Plus was shown to be an acceptable oral dosage form that was consumed at first offering by the majority of dogs.

PRECAUTIONS: All dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infection before starting treatment with HEARTGARD® Plus which is not effective against adult D. immitis infected dogs must be treated to remove adult heartworms and microfilariae before initiating a program with HEARTGARD® Plus. While some microfilariae may be killed by the ivermectin in HEARTGARD® Plus at the recommended dose level, HEARTGARD® Plus is not effective for microfilariae clearance. A mild hypersensitivity-type reaction, presumably due to dead or dying microfilariae and particularly involving a transient diarrhea, has been observed in clinical trials with ivermectin alone after treatment of some dogs that have circulating microfilariae. Keep this and all dogs off the reach of children.

In case of ingestion by humans, clients should be advised to contact a physician immediately. Physicians may contact a Poison Control Center for advice concerning cases of ingestion by humans.

Store between 68°F - 77°F (20°C - 25°C). Excursions between 59°F - 86°F (15°C - 30°C) are permitted. Protect product from light.

ADVERSE REACTIONS: In clinical field trials with HEARTGARD® Plus, vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of dosing was rarely observed (1.1% of administered dogs). The following adverse reactions have been reported following the use of HEARTGARD: Depression/lethargy, vomiting, anorexia, diarrhea, mydriasis, ataxia, staggering, convulsions and hypo/hyperthermia.

SAFETY: HEARTGARD® Plus has been shown to be bioequivalent to HEARTGARD® with respect to the bioavailability of ivermectin. The dose regimen of HEARTGARD® Plus and HEARTGARD® are the same with regard to ivermectin (16 mcg/kg). Studies with ivermectin indicate that certain dogs of the Collie breed are more sensitive to the effects of ivermectin administered at elevated dose levels (more than 16 times the target use level) than dogs of other breeds. At elevated doses, sensitive dogs showed adverse reactions which included mydriasis, depression, ataxia, tremors, diarrhea, excitement, exophthalmia, convulsions, coma and death. HEARTGARD® Plus administered at 10 times the recommended dose (80 mcg/kg) in sensitive Collies. Results of these trials and bioavailability studies, support the safety of HEARTGARD® products in dogs, including Collies, when used as recommended.

HEARTGARD® Plus has no adverse effects on the recommended dose level in dogs, including pregnant or nursing bitches, stud dogs and puppies aged four weeks or more. In clinical trials, many commonly used flea collars, dips, shampoos, anthelmintics, antibiotics, vaccines and steroid preparations have been administered with HEARTGARD® Plus in a heartworm disease prevention program.

In one trial, where some puppies had pneumonia, there was a marginal reduction in efficacy against intestinal nematodes, possibly due to a change in intestinal transit time.

HOW SUPPLIED: HEARTGARD® Plus is available in three dosage strengths (See DOSEAGE section) for dogs of different weights. Each strength comes in convenient cartons of six or twelve microgranules.

For customer service, please contact Meridian at 1-888-637-4251.

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