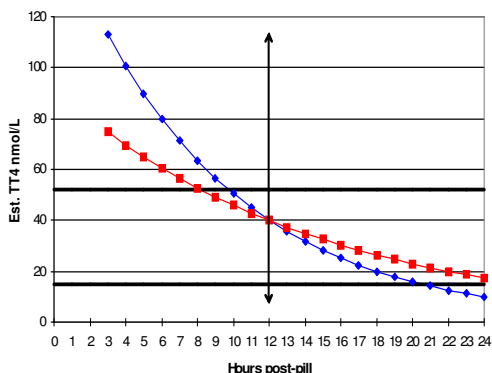


Testing and Monitoring Thyroid Function—2



In the September 2009 NWL Newsletter we speculated that fat, lazy dogs and thin, cross cats are as common as ever, judging by the number of blood samples we continue to receive for thyroid function tests! Our focus last month was a thumb-nail guide to testing, this month we shall explore thyroid monitoring.



Monitoring hypothyroid dogs

A major issue with therapeutic monitoring is that it is not always convenient for you or your client to take blood samples during a specific period post tablet. NWL have developed a spreadsheet based monitoring graph which removes that necessity—see the example above.

So long as we know how long post pill a monitoring sample was taken, we can use the T4 result obtained to prepare a graph, assuming a 6—10 hour half life for thyroxine, which gives a clear indication of whether or not the dosage at the time of monitoring is appropriate.

For more information, see the recent article (*In Practice* 31: 77-82 (2009)) by our Managing Director, Dr Peter Graham, who is an expert in endocrinology.

Monitoring hyperthyroid cats

For cats, research presented at a recent ACVIM meeting has indicated that timing of blood sampling after methimazole administration does not appear to be a significant factor when assessing response to therapy. T4 results within the lower half of the normal feline reference interval are taken to indicate adequate medical control of hyperthyroidism.



Treatment with carbimazole or methimazole can be associated with changes in hepatic, renal and haematological parameters, so it is recommended that some routine blood work up is done as part of the monitoring process.

The NWL Feline Hyperthyroid Monitor profile (code FHM) is ideal for monitoring purposes, including T4, ALP, ALT, urea, creatinine, phosphorus, calcium and haematology, for a total cost of £24.40 + VAT.

NWL Clin Path Club

The next NWL Clin Path CPD meeting is at 8.00 pm at the Holiday Inn Leeds Bradford, Tong, on Thursday 29 Oct 09. **Sarah Ambler will speak on dermatology**—contact Carol Ann Thompson on 07725307836 for more details.

NWL Screening Tests for *E. coli* O157



Following the recent cases of children infected with *E. coli* O157 after visiting petting farms up and down the country, we have included testing for the organism in our Faecal Zoonoses package, in addition to offering stand alone testing. Uptake of testing has been brisk by clients advising farms and zoos where close contact between visitors and livestock is encouraged.

The NWL Faecal Zoonoses package (FAEZ) includes tests for *E. coli* O157, salmonella, campylobacter, giardia, cryptosporidia, worm eggs and coccidia at a price of £34.00 + VAT per sample. Bulk discounts are available—contact the lab for details.

The infective dose of *E. coli* O157 is very small compared with other enteropathogens, so testing environmental swabs, in addition to faecal testing of livestock in direct contact with the public, can be helpful for screening purposes. The cost for *E. coli* O157 alone is £12.00 + VAT per test and again discounts are available.