

Splenic Tumors

Tumors or masses involving the spleen are the most common reason why the spleen is removed. There are both benign and malignant masses that occur in the spleen. Splenic hematoma or hyperplasia are examples of benign masses. The prognosis following removal of the spleen for these benign lesions is good.

The most common malignant splenic tumor is hemangiosarcoma. Other malignant tumors involving the spleen include leiomyosarcoma, fibrosarcoma, osteosarcoma, lymphosarcoma, and mast cell tumor which all have variable prognoses.

Splenic hemangiosarcoma is a tumor that arises within the blood vessels. It is highly malignant since it is being delivered to virtually every organ due to the blood vessels. The spleen is the most common place for this tumor to occur, but may occur in the heart, bone, or skin. Metastasis (spread) is usually found in the lungs, liver and heart. It usually occurs in older dogs (>8 years of age). It is common for these dogs to present with acute collapse due to tumor rupture leading to blood loss.

Most splenic tumors in cats are mast cell tumors.

Your pet may undergo abdominal and thoracic (chest) radiographs and an abdominal ultrasound to diagnosis a mass in the spleen. These diagnostic tests can not differentiate between a benign or malignant mass unless there is obvious signs of metastasis. A splenectomy is performed and the spleen is submitted to a pathologist for review. This is the only way to diagnose hemangiosarcoma.

The prognosis for splenic hemangiosarcoma is poor without chemotherapy. The average survival without chemotherapy is less than 3 months. The survival rate increases to 3-6 months with chemotherapy. Some dogs with or without chemotherapy have shorter or longer survivals and the above information is based on averages.

Splenic hemangiosarcoma

