

Arthundur Tollers



## **Auto Immune Issues**

There are auto immune mediated problems within the UK Toller population. Both genetic and environmental factors seem to play a part though research is currently fairly limited. The current state of knowledge is that there are family links with a probable environmental trigger, but we would stress that research is ongoing at present.

The most recent estimate is that approximately 5% of the Toller population may be affected.

# Most common Auto immune issues in Tollers

## **SRMA (Steroid Responsive Meningitis Arteritis)**

The cause of SRMA is unknown but is thought to be due to an autoimmune disease process causing inflammation of the meninges (the covering layer of the central nervous system) and peripheral nerve roots. It also affects arteries and tissues in many of the body's systems. SRMA is a non-infectious, inflammatory disease usually affecting young animals under the age of 2. (Toller Club, 2021)

## **What to look for?**

It can be cyclic in nature but the initial onset of the disease is usually sudden, showing symptoms such as high temperature, neck stiffness, lethargy, intense pain (especially around the neck and ears), general body stiffness and sensitivity to touch.

# IMPA (Immune Mediated Polyarthrititis)

IMPA is a disease in which the immune system mounts an inflammatory response within the joints, causing pain, swelling and difficulty walking. In IMPA, the immune system is inappropriately activated to send white blood cells to the joints. The white blood cells release chemicals and enzymes into the fluid that bathes the joints, disrupting the protective function of this fluid.

Treatment for IMPA is via immunosuppressive dosage of prednisolone, as per SRMA. (Toller club, 2021)

## What to look for?

IMPA causes sore, swollen joints; patients are often lethargic and reluctant to move. Frequently the patient will walk only when forced, cry with movement or may seem to walk as if stepping on a hot surface. When the joints in the spine are affected, patients may cry when the neck is touched or their collar is pulled. (Vetsspecialist.net)

# GME (Granulomatous meningoencephalitis)

GME is an inflammatory autoimmune disease of the central nervous system. It comes on very quickly and is life-threatening. The inflammation results in granulomas, which are clusters of cells that form when the immune system tries to build a barrier against foreign substances.

Granulomas can develop in a single location, multiple locations, or throughout the central nervous system. In GME, the cells encircle blood vessels in the white matter of the brain and spinal cord, causing neurologic and ophthalmic symptoms. (Toller club, 2021)

## What to look for?

- Ataxia (stumbling, wobbly gait)
- Drowsiness
- Blindness or vision problems
- Behavior changes
- Facial paralysis
- A weakness of hind limbs or all four limbs
- Depressed attitude
- Head pressing against objects
- Circling
- Seizures