about their ultrastructure. These preliminary results point out a similar morphology and size distribution between epididymosomes and prostasomes but show differences in concentration. The high concentration of EVs in the epididymal fluid supports the important role of epididymosomes in semen maturation. Data from a larger population and further characterisation are however required to describe these EVs into more detail.


086 | Inquiry on the attitude and experiences of owners towards neutering their dog
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Introduction and aim: Neutering pets has become routine in the last decades and is now the most common surgical procedure carried out by companion animal veterinarians (1). The initial drive behind the widespread practice of spaying dogs was to control pet population and prevent diseases from the reproductive tract (gonadal and mammary tumours, pyometra, etc.). Nonetheless, some recent studies suggest a number of drawbacks of neutering on long-term health parameters in dogs (2). Therefore, the topic of neutering dogs and the appropriate timing for it, is sure to spark hot debate. Besides teaching the scientific data, we are convinced that it is utmost important that last year veterinary students gain more insights in expectations and appreciations of veterinary clients concerning neutering their dog.

Materials and methods: Participants were included in the waiting room of the small animal department of the faculty of veterinary medicine from September 2018 till February 2019. They were asked open-ended questions concerning the reasons for having the dog neutered and the obstacles or negatives for neutering. Furthermore, we informed if they experienced downsides and unexpected outcomes after neutering their dog.

Results: Information from 65 participants was collected (31 owners of a neutered male dog, 34 owners of a neutered female). At the moment of the survey, the mean age of the dogs was 7.2 year (9 months-15.5 years). The mean age at castration was 2.8 years (0.5–9 years) for the male dogs and 3.2 years (0.5–12 years) for the female dogs. For the females, neutering occurred predominantly (68.6%) after puberty. The time after castration was on average 4.1 year for the male dogs and 4.3 years for the females. The reason to neuter the dog was curative in 26.2% of the cases (because of pyometra, mammary neoplasia or severe pseudo-pregnancy for the females, cryptorchidism, prostate hyperplasia, balanoposthitis and testicular neoplasia for male dogs). 'Behaviour improvement' was mentioned in 27.7% of the cases as a reason, but was mainly an issue for male dogs (54.8% vs. 2.9% in female dogs). For 29.6% (5/17) of these males, the effect of neutering on the behaviour was first tested by chemical castration. 'Prevention of breeding' (21.5% in total; 3.2% in males vs. 35.3% in females) and 'preventive health care' (20.0% in total; 9.7% in males vs. 32.4% in females) were stated as reasons predominantly in females. In females, 29.4% mentioned 'prevention of heat symptoms' and 8.8% 'because the vet told us so' as reasons for neutering. During the decision-making process to spay their dog, half of the participants (56.9%) were not aware of any side effects related to neutering, the other participants mentioned 'the risk of the anaesthesia and surgery complications' (18.5%), 'weight gain' (15.4%), 'changes in behaviour' (7.7%), 'coat changes' (6.2%) and 'urinary incontinence' (1.5%) after neutering as an obstacle for them to perform the procedure. After surgery, 41.5% of the participants did not observe any downsides of neutering for their dog. 'Weight gain' and 'coat changes' were mentioned as a downside in 33.8% and 18.5% respectively. Other downsides were 'induction of anxious behaviour' (6.2), 'no changes in behaviour' (3.1%), 'urinary incontinence' (3.1%), 'costs' (1.5%), 'post-op care' (1.5%) and 'no pups anymore' (1.5%). For 78.5% of the participants no unexpected outcomes occurred, whereas 'behaviour changes' (6.2%), 'coat changes' (6.2%), 'urinary incontinence' (1.5%), 'weight gain' (1.5%) and the fact that the behavioural problem was not solved (1.5%) were reported as unexpected by other participants.

Conclusions: By talking to dog owners, the last year vet students realized that, although neutering is considered as a routine procedure, a good communication between vet and client is of utmost importance. Half of the participants mentioned that they were not aware of any complications related to the procedure, which might be caused by insufficient knowledge of potential side-effects (on short or long term). Side-effects were observed in almost 60% of the cases, and for 21.5% of the participants some of these outcomes were unexpected.


088 | Reproductive potential of male wolves (Canis lupus) in Sweden, based on examination of testes and epididymis
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Introduction and aim: The population of grey wolves (Canis lupus) in Scandinavia consists of family groups and pair-bonded wolves located both in Sweden and Norway (1). The population was practically extinct in Scandinavia in 1968 (2), but has increased over the