RESUMO SIMPLES - OUTRAS ÁREAS TEMÁTICAS

INFECTIOUS VAGINITIS IN CATS: A RARE CLINICAL CONDITION WITH BEHAVIORAL AND HYGEINE IMPLICATIONS

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Vaginitis is an inflammation of the vaginal mucosa that is considered common in dogs. However, it is a rare condition in cats, and its causes are generally associated with malformations, foreign bodies, infections, neoplasia, or trauma. Clinical signs include vaginal discharge, which may range from mucoid to purulent and may or may not be blood-tinged, excessive licking of the vulvar region, and attraction of other cats. The main differential diagnoses are pyometra and stump pyometra. The objective of this case report is to describe the diagnosis and treatment of infectious vaginitis in a female cat and to discuss

its probable etiologies. A female mixed-breed long-haired cat, approximately one and a half years old, spayed about one year earlier, and FIV/FeLV negative, was presented with the owner's complaint of vaginal discharge. During anamnesis, the owner reported a change in the behavior of other household cats, which began chasing the patient to smell the discharge, leading to frequent fights and compromising overall welfare. The patient was found to be normally hydrated, normothermic, with normal mucous membrane coloration, no abdominal discomfort on palpation, and no apparent anatomic alterations of the vagina. A vaginal sample was collected for culture and antimicrobial susceptibility testing by introducing approximately 1 cm of the swab in the vaginal canal, rotating it 360° in both directions, and immediately inoculating it into Stuart medium. Blood samples were obtained for hematologic testing, and abdominal ultrasonography was performed. Ultrasonography ruled out stump pyometra and cystitis, and hematological parameters showed no abnormalities. Marbofloxacin (5 mg/kg, PO, SID for 21 days) was prescribed until culture results returned, which revealed infection by Pseudomonas aeruginosa, sensitive to the previously chosen antibiotic, treatment was continued. The patient showed clinical improvement, however, one month after treatment completion, vaginal discharge recurred. On re-examination, no additional clinical abnormalities were noted aside from the discharge. A second vaginal swab collection was performed as before, yielding growth of Escherichia coli sensitive to marbofloxacin. Treatment was reinitiated, again with clinical improvement. Approximately three months after treatment completion, the patient again presented purulent vaginal discharge. New ultrasonography was performed, and a direct sterile swab collection of the vaginal discharge observed during consultation was obtained and immediately placed in Stuart medium. Ultrasonography once again excluded stump pyometra, and culture revealed growth of Bacillus spp., resistant to the previously used antibiotic. Treatment with clindamycin (5.5 mg/kg, PO, BID for 30 days) was instituted. After treatment, the patient improved clinically, however, she continued to experience occasional episodes of purulent discharge. Complete remission of vaginitis occurred after the implementation of antimicrobial therapy combined with periodic sanitary trimming of the perineal region. The grooming habit and anatomical singularities of the species are the main factors that make infectious vaginitis rare in cats; however, the patient described had long hair, which impaired effective self-cleaning, thereby facilitating bacterial contamination from fecal material and the environment. Although the patient showed no significant clinical alterations other than vaginal discharge, the increased frequency of

fights among the cats in the home was the main behavioral change noted by the owner. The positive therapeutic response in association with sanitary trimming supports the hypothesis that inadequate grooming was the primary predisposing factor. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that vaginitis diminishes animal welfare and, although rare, should not be disregarded as a differential diagnosis.

Palavras-chave: feline vaginitis; vaginal discharge; animal welfare.