

August 6, 1999
Linda S. Ross, DVM
Laurelhurst Veterinary Hospital

Dear Dr. Ross:

Enclosed are some pages I printed from the internet, which discuss treatment and dosages for Addison's Disease. They're from a variety of sources, including Novartis, the maker of Percorten (DOCP). I also subscribe to an e-mail list for owner's of dogs with Addison's. There are about 170 subscribers representing all kinds of cases, treatments and results. I've already learned so much in just a month. It's a great source for anecdotal information, as many of these people have been dealing with this disease for years and years. There also are several vets and pharmacists monitoring and contributing to the discussions.

I'm really happy with the way Booker has responded so far, although one month and a couple of blood tests don't really prove a whole lot. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that he will remain stable and easy to treat. His personality is back bigger than ever - he looks and acts healthy and full of energy. I in no way want to jeopardize his health or risk setbacks to his stabilization - I definitely want to proceed with caution. So, longer term (when we're all convinced he really is stabilized) I would like to look at ways to maintain his health in a more affordable manner.

As I mentioned to you, I broached the subject of cost with Dr. Tobias at Northwest Veterinary Specialists. They charge \$60 for the first ml and \$40 per ml after that - the information I've found says Novartis charges around \$19 per ml (4 ml vial for \$75). So his first shot at 117 lbs. was \$208 (cost = \$89). His second shot at 136 lbs. was \$236 (cost = \$103). She said she would bring it up to Dr. Mack on his return next week. I'm supposed to call him to follow-up middle of next week. I don't hold a lot of hope that they'll be flexible. But, it is a possibility. By the way, the injection is given by a tech and they don't charge an office visit.

Unless there is a compelling reason to continue to see the specialist, I would actually prefer to continue treatment with you (and/or Dr. Anderson) at Laurelhurst.

Another longer-term option I would like to explore is for me to give Booker the injections at home. Numerous people on the e-mail list who have been dealing with Addison's for some time are giving their dogs injections at home. They've found this to be beneficial in a number of ways, including lowering costs without burdening the vet's office and less stress on the dog by not having to take a trip to the vet's once a month. But, one step at a time.

I'm looking at ways to get treatment that is medically- and cost-effective for Booker because he's a young dog who's going to require (we hope) many years of medication. Plus, he's a big dog, who's only going to get bigger, which means bigger doses.

I appreciate all the wonderful care that Booker, Sparky and Ray have received from everyone at Laurelhurst. Their lives have truly been saved by it!

Thanks for everything,
Shannon Wilkinson