ICADA Reviews and Guidelines

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The four review papers on feline allergic diseases that are published in this issue are contributed by members of the International Committee on Allergic Diseases of Animals (ICADA). This organization had its origins in the Task Force on Canine Atopic Dermatitis which was formed in 1999 by the American College of Veterinary Dermatology (ACVD). The group completed 24 papers on the topic which were published in a special issue of Veterinary Immunology and Immunopathology in 2001. The group then expanded its membership to include more international representatives and continued its work on canine atopic dermatitis (cAD) as The International Task Force on Canine Atopic Dermatitis (ITFCAD). In 2010 the group changed its remit to include all allergic diseases affecting all domestic animal species and was reformed as ICADA, and is an affiliate organization of the World Association for Veterinary Dermatology (WAVD). The stated remit is: • To arrange for the publication of critical reviews on atopic dermatitis and other allergic conditions of domestic animal species • To encourage and foster the development of research projects • To advance the practice of veterinary dermatology as applied to allergic diseases by encouraging best practice through publications, lectures etc.; developing systems of quality control of laboratory tests relevant to the diagnosis of allergic diseases; and other approaches that may from time to time become appropriate. Since the original publications of the ACVD Task Force, under its different guises, the group has contributed 19 papers to the literature, most notably detailed practice guidelines on the treatment of cAD, which have been translated into seven languages. The current project to review the feline allergic diseases with a series of papers similar to those published by the ACVD Task Force on cAD was first discussed in 2013. After detailed consideration both at a number of ICADA meetings and ensuing discussions, the umbrella term “feline atopic syndrome” was proposed to include the feline hypersensitivity disorders, with the exclusion of mosquito bite allergy and flea allergy dermatitis. The latter two conditions are not considered as atopic diseases in humans or any other species. However, it was not until 2018 that the research and drafting commenced. It was agreed to approach the topic under four headings – namely an Introduction (which included justification for the proposed nomenclature), Pathogenesis, Clinical signs and diagnosis, and finally Treatment. Following the adopted ICADA principles, small working groups drawn from the ICADA membership were assigned to each topic, with all members having input into the Introduction. If any aspects of the topic(s) were not within the competence of members of the working groups – as occurred in the case of feline asthma – then external input was sought, and ICADA is most grateful to Bianka Schulz of the University of Munich for her contributions. Once the drafts were agreed by each working group, they were sent to the full ICADA membership for detailed consideration, critique and input before submission. This topic is timely. Not only do the papers summarize all of the published work, but they also draw attention to the limited knowledge base, and identify areas that are crucial for future research. Some of the recommendations may well prove controversial, but they have emanated from countless hours of discussions, and we hope that any such controversies will in turn provide the necessary stimuli for further research.

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