



SAFE, EFFECTIVE and INEXPENSIVE TREATMENT of HEARTWORM in DOGS



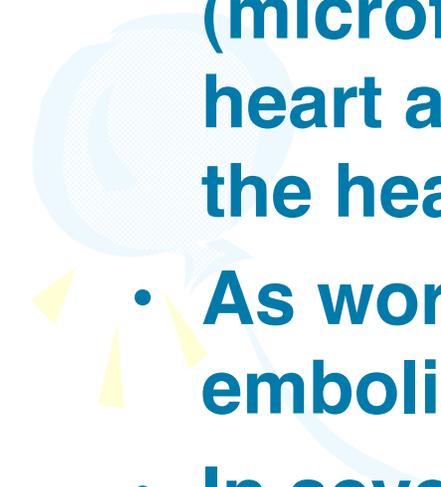


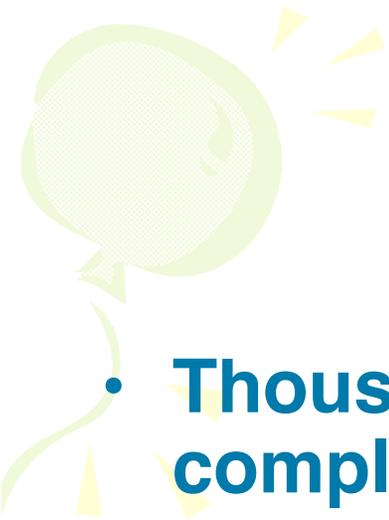
Heartworms

- **Heartworms are transmitted by mosquitoes that have bitten HW-infected animals.**
- **Heartworms spend their adult life in the right side of the heart and the large blood vessels connecting the heart to the lungs.**



The Dangers of Heartworm

- **Adult heartworms and their offspring (microfilaria) can obstruct chambers of the heart and large blood vessels leading from the heart to the lungs.**
 - **As worms die they can cause pulmonary embolisms.**
 - **In severe infections, the worms can block the large vein, causing blood to back up, and consequently damaging the liver.**
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Did You Know?

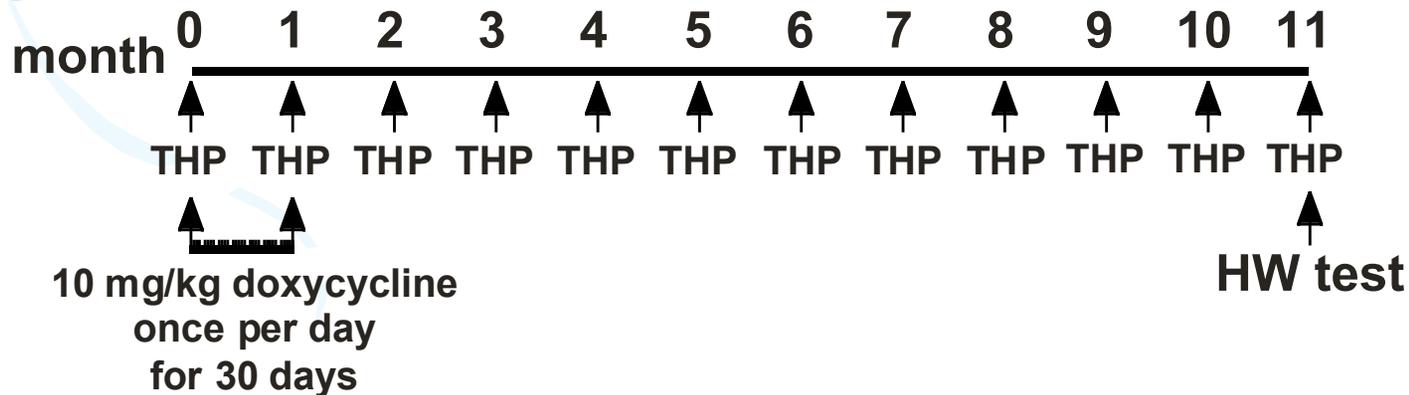
- **Thousands of dogs die each year from complications of HW disease.**
 - **HW is a disease that EVERY dog can contract, in ALL 50 states.**
 - **Dogs living in the Gulf Coast and FL are at greatest risk.**
 - **One bite from an infected mosquito is all it takes for a dog to become infected with heartworms.**
 - **Many shelters euthanize dogs that test HW+.**
 - **HW disease is virtually 100% preventable!**
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Traditional Treatment for HW disease: Immiticide (IM)

- IM is an organic arsenical chemotherapeutic agent.
- IM is contraindicated in dogs with very severe HW disease.
- IM has a LOW margin of safety.
- All dogs with HW disease are at risk for post-treatment pulmonary thromboembolism (death of worms which may result in fever, weakness, and coughing).
- After treatment, the patient must be strictly confined for one month. No walks, no running around. The dog must live the indoor life. The reason for this is that embolism to some degree is inevitable and it is important to minimize embolism-related problems.
- IM treatment is **EXPENSIVE!**
- IM is the **ONLY** recognized method of treatment by the veterinary community at large and by the FDA.

The Slow-Kill (Gentle) HW Treatment

- HW preventative (ivermectin) is given once per month for 12 months to kill microfilaria (we use Tri-Heart Plus or Heartgard Plus) .
- Doxycycline (10 mg/kg, 5 mg/lb) is given for 30 days to weaken the adult heartworm.
- HW test is repeated after one year.
- Dog continues on HW preventative for life to prevent against reinfection.



THP = Tri-Heart Plus

Mango, our first success!



- Mango, an outdoor dog for seven years, was picked up the fifth time by animal control in GA in March, 2008. The family did not want him back this time so his days were numbered. ERU rescued him and he went immediately to Colbert Animal Hospital where he was treated by Dr. Gloria Andrews. Mango was found to be HW+. Dr. Andrews explained the slow HW-kill method to us and that's the method we followed. Mango was adopted in April and HW free in January, 2009!

Buddy & Apple

- Buddy was an owner surrender to ERU - his owner of eight years could no longer afford to take care of him. He tested HW+ in March, 2008 and after following the slow HW-kill method was HW free 12 months later! Buddy was adopted while HW+.



- Apple was an owner surrender to a shelter in LA, and after testing HW+ by the shelter was on death row. ERU rescued her, followed the slow HW-kill method, and she was HW free 12 months later! Apple was adopted while HW+.



Angel & Nathan



- Angel and her pups were dropped off at a shelter in NC. ERU rescued the whole family. Angel tested HW+ in May, 2008 and after following the slow HW-kill method was HW free 10 months later! Angel was adopted while HW+.
- Nathan was a stray picked up by animal control in NC. ERU rescued him and found him to be HW+ in July, 2008. After following the slow HW-kill method, Nathan was HW free 12 months later! Nathan was adopted after he tested negative for HW.

Baylor & Ginger

- Baylor is our 1st eskie that tested *high* HW+. Baylor is a senior and had severe HW disease before ERU rescued her from a shelter in FL. After one year following the slow-HW kill method she is still HW+. We are continuing this treatment and will retest her in another year. Baylor is still in foster care.



- Ginger is our second *high* HW+ eskie. After 11 months of the slow-HW kill treatment she tested negative for HW! Ginger was adopted while HW+.



The Slow-HW Kill Method: Keeping Families Together!



- **Maria C adopted a neglected eskie, Henri, from a neighbor in Orlando, FL. Henri was found to be HW+. The bill for Immiticide treatment was > \$1000! Maria could not afford his treatment and was considering putting Henri down; she did not want to see him suffer from HW disease.**
- **We told Maria about the slow HW-kill treatment, sent her everything she needed to treat Henri, and Henri is well on his way to being HW-free!**

The Slow-HW Kill Method: What If Shelters Knew?

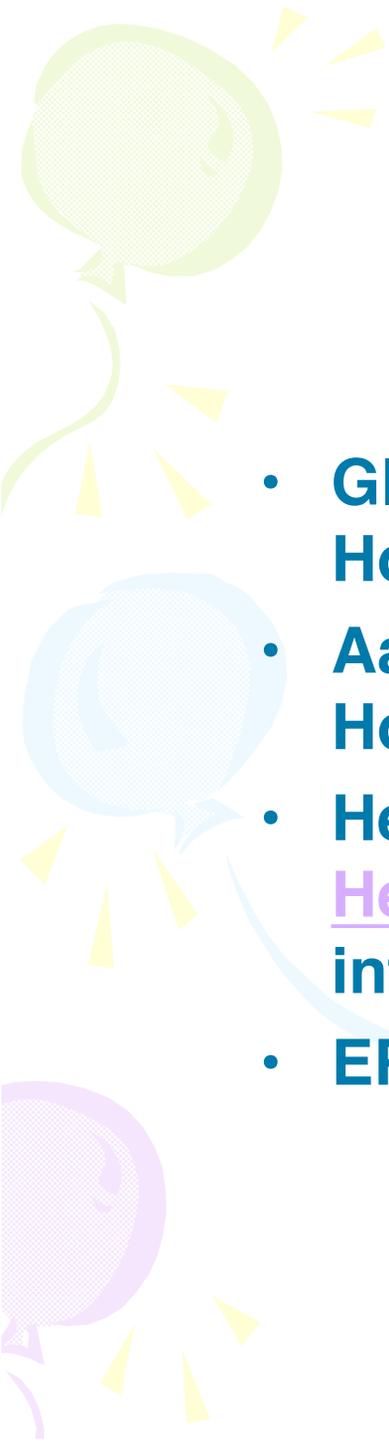


- Like many dogs that end up in shelters, Wilbur was found to be HW+. The shelter policy is to *euthanize all HW+ dogs*. Thankfully the person that performed the test did not get this info to their supervisor in time, the supervisor released Wilbur to ERU and Wilbur's life was saved. ERU, Wilbur and his new family are glad he slipped through the cracks!

Summary

The slow-kill (gentle) method for treating heartworms is:

- **SAFE:** No adverse effects in 10 ERU dogs treated with this method.
- **EFFECTIVE:** 9 out of 10 ERU dogs have tested negative after one year or less.
- **INEXPENSIVE:** Average cost is \$50 for the 12-month treatment.



Acknowledgements

- **Gloria Andrews, DVM, Colbert Animal Hospital, Colbert, GA**
- **Aaron Weissberg, DVM, Community Animal Hospital, Randallstown, MD**
- **Heidi Ortmeyer, Ph.D., ERU Director (contact Heidi@eskierescuers.org for more information)**
- **ERU foster homes and adopters**