CANINE CALCIUM PHOSPHATE CARBONATE UROLITHS IN DOGS

Like struvite, calcium phosphate carbonate forms as a consequence of urinary tract infection with bacteria that produce the enzyme urease. Preventing urinary tract infection is the primary method to prevent calcium phosphate carbonate urolith recurrence.

Calcium phosphate carbonate commonly forms in breeds that are also at risk for calcium oxalate uroliths (Shih Tzu, Bichon, miniature Schnauzer, etc.). We hypothesize that increased calcium excretion in combination with urinary tract infection are important risk factors for calcium phosphate carbonate. Therefore, avoid therapies that increase the risk for calcium oxalate (i.e. do not overly acidify urine).

MINIMIZING RECURRENCE

** DIAGNOSTIC CONSIDERATIONS **
Identify and eradicate structural and functional risk factors for recurrent infections. Culture the urine.

** MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS **
Culture and susceptibility testing provides the most accurate method for selecting effective antimicrobials. Penicillins (e.g. amoxicillin) are usually effective against the most common urease producing bacteria (i.e. Staphylococcus sp.)

** NUTRITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS **
Canned foods for older dogs which are lower in protein, phosphorus, and sodium (<5.5g, <170mg, <150mg per 100 kilocalories, respectively), that do not over-acidify urine (e.g. Hill’s g/d, c/d Multicare, Science Diet Mature Adult Gourmet Turkey or Beef Entrée, other diets promoting urine pH≥6.5)

** MONITORING CONSIDERATIONS **
Periodic urine cultures (e.g. every 3 months) to manage recurrent infections before uroliths recur.

** Review manufacturer’s therapeutic food literature to determine indications/contraindications. For pets with multiple health concerns, consult a veterinary nutritionist to select an optimal food.**

Support from veterinarians, pet owners, and Hills Pet Nutrition, make our work possible.
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Uroliths composed primarily of calcium phosphate carbonate are uncommon. However, this mineral in small quantities is commonly associated with uroliths composed of struvite because both minerals form as a consequence of urinary tract infection with bacteria (e.g. Staphylococcus sp. & Proteus sp.) that produce urease. When urease hydrolyzes urea, carbonates are formed and urine pH increases; both are risk factors for calcium phosphate carbonate precipitation. Although struvite is readily amenable to medical dissolution, calcium phosphate carbonate appears less amenable to a similar dissolution protocol. It may be possible that struvite uroliths that contain smaller amounts of calcium phosphate carbonate, (e.g. less than 30% in any layer) can be medically dissolved by protocols designed for struvite dissolution (see recommendations for Canine Struvite Uroliths at urolithcenter.org).

Calcium phosphate carbonate uroliths primarily form in female dogs (72%) presumably because females are at greater risk for urinary tract infections than male dogs. We have also recognized that breeds that form calcium phosphate carbonate uroliths (Shih Tzu, Bichon, miniature Schnauzer, etc.) are similar to those at risk for calcium oxalate uroliths. Therefore, we hypothesize that increased calcium excretion in combination with urinary tract infection with bacteria that produce urease are important risk factors favoring calcium phosphate carbonate urolith formation.

MINIMIZING RECURRENCE

**MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**AMOXICILLIN**
Penicillins are usually effective against the most common urease producing bacterium (i.e. Staphylococcus sp.).

**NUTRITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**CANNED FOODS FOR SENIOR DOGS**
Foods for older dogs that are lower in protein, phosphorus, and sodium (<5g, <170mg, <150mg per 100 kilocalories, respectively), which do not promote acidic urine are usually associated with decreased calcium and phosphorus excretion.

**MONITORING CONSIDERATIONS**

**URINE CULTURE**
Periodic urine cultures for aerobic bacteria to detect recurrent infections before urolith recurrence.
**CANINE CALCIUM PHOSPHATE CARBONATE RISK MANAGEMENT**

**Monitor:** Urine culture (± urinalysis) in 1 month and then every 3 to 6 months

Consider medical imaging every 6 months, or sooner in patients with recurrent urinary signs

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**Negative Culture**

- Repeat Culture and UA every 3 to 6 months.
- Repeat culture with any signs of emerging infection (e.g. excessive licking of vulva, urinating in house, pollakiuria, hematuria, etc.)

**Positive Culture**

- Consider type of therapy based on urolith location and prediction of mineral type.
- Submit retrieved uroliths for quantitative mineral analysis.

**Calcium Oxalate Crystalluria**

- Verify persistent, in vivo crystalluria by reevaluating an appropriately collected (in hospital) fresh urine sample analyzed within 30 minutes
- If persistent and in breeds at increased risk for CaOx uroliths (Bichon, Miniature schnauzer, Yorkshire terrier, Shih Tzu, Lhasa Apso, others), discontinue any diets that promote formation of acidic urine and consult dietary and non-dietary recommendations for calcium oxalate risk management.

**Uroliths**

- Verify persistent, in vivo crystalluria by reevaluating an appropriately collected (in hospital) fresh urine sample analyzed within 30 minutes
- If persistent and in breeds at increased risk for CaOx uroliths (Bichon, Miniature schnauzer, Yorkshire terrier, Shih Tzu, Lhasa Apso, others), discontinue any diets that promote formation of acidic urine and consult dietary and non-dietary recommendations for calcium oxalate risk management.

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**Indentify and eradicate structural (via vaginourethrocystoscopy, contrast vaginourethrocystography, and ultrasonography) and functional (via urine cortisol to creatinine ratio, serum biochemical and thyroid profiles, and neurological exam) risk factors for recurrent infections**

- Initiate antimicrobial therapy based on susceptibility results.
- Verify antimicrobial effectiveness (culture urine during therapy)
- With additional recurrent infections, administer full dose antimicrobics for 7-14 days and then consider low-dose (1/3 to 1/2 daily dose), long-term (9 to 12 months), nightly antimicrobics; monitor with periodic urine cultures.

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**Review manufacturer’s therapeutic food literature to determine indications/contraindications. For pets with multiple health concerns, consult a veterinary nutritionist to select an optimal food.**