Owner Fact Sheet: Canine Mammary Tumors

WHAT IS IT?
- A lump (or lumps) that is located in the breast area
- Approximately 50% of the cases are malignant (bad)

WHAT SIGNS COULD MY PET HAVE?
Most animals do not present with clinical signs other than the painless lump(s) that are beneath the skin in the breast area

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY DOG?
If you feel a lump in this area, make an appointment with your veterinarian to have it checked out, as soon as possible

DIAGNOSIS
Your veterinarian will discuss X-rays (and/or ultrasound) to evaluate tumor spread and may want to take tumor samples. The final diagnosis is confirmed with biopsy

I HAVE A PUPPY. CAN I DO ANYTHING TO REDUCE THE RISK OF FUTURE MAMMARY TUMORS?
- Early spay (defined as the first two years) decreases significantly the risk of developing mammary tumors and the mortality associated with them
- Avoid the routine use of contraceptives, because these medications increase the risk of developing mammary tumors

THERAPY
- Surgery is the best treatment for most masses
- If the tumor is still small, mammary cancer can often be cured with surgery alone
- Some animals will need additional treatment after surgery

PROGNOSIS
Variable, many dogs can be cured with surgical removal of the lump alone

The WSAVA Oncology Working Group (WOW Group) is one of the WSAVA’s newest committees and is working hard to create resources to raise awareness of the latest research and standard of care in cancer therapy and promote best practice globally. The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 115 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition, oncology and vaccination, together with lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide.