



ONCOLOGY

We know it is difficult when your pet receives a diagnosis of cancer. Austin Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center (AVES) is here to help.

Our experienced Oncology department will walk you through the disease process and available treatment options. We'll explain any potential side effects of the chosen course of treatment, as well as any available palliative measures, to assist your family in making the most informed decision possible for you and your pet.

OUR DOCTORS

Board-certified veterinary oncologists specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in animals. To become board-certified, candidates must complete extensive post-graduate study and training, demonstrate clinical competency under close supervision, and pass a comprehensive examination in the specialty.



Timothy Stein, DVM, PhD,
DACVIM (Oncology)



Brittany Wittenberns, DVM, MS
(Practice Limited to Oncology)

OUR SERVICES

Chemotherapy

This type of care is often used to treat various cancers that have spread (or have a high potential to spread) to other parts of the body. Chemotherapy is most commonly administered intravenously or by mouth to the patient. It is given on an outpatient basis. Fortunately, chemotherapy causes fewer side effects in animals than people—and pets generally see good results. The number and frequency of treatments depend on the type of cancer and the overall treatment goals.

Immunotherapy

This is a treatment that stimulates your pet's immune system to fight off a particular cancer. One example of immunotherapy is the canine melanoma vaccine which is used to treat canine oral melanoma. This form of treatment is very well-tolerated and can help extend the lives of dogs with oral malignant melanoma.

Surgery

This treatment option is used to treat specific types of cancer. At AVES, we work closely with a board-certified surgeon. The best chance of achieving complete removal of the tumor is during the first surgery.

Palliative care

This therapy focuses on providing relief from the symptoms and pain associated with cancer. The main goal is to improve the quality of life for your pet. Palliative care may include pain management, medications to stimulate appetite, and medications to help with nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea. This can also include intravenous drugs to help with bone pain from primary osteosarcoma or other bone tumors.

Additional options

Other cancer treatments can include radiation therapy. Our oncology team can discuss these options with you and refer you to a radiation oncologist as needed.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

At your initial appointment, Dr. Stein or Dr. Wittenberns will review your pet's medical history, perform a complete physical examination and discuss diagnostic and treatment options. You will have the opportunity to ask questions and review a treatment plan designed specifically for your pet.

The AVES oncology team is here to support your family's decision. If cancer treatment is elected, we will work alongside your family veterinarian to be with you every step of the way. If you do not wish to pursue treatment, we can discuss palliative treatment recommendations to keep your pet comfortable and happy.

CANCER MYTHS VS. FACTS

We recognize that you may have many questions about your pet's cancer and treatment options. We also realize that there are many myths or misconceptions that can be scary. We hope to serve as a resource to assist your family during this challenging time.

MYTH: The prognosis is ALWAYS poor.

FACT: There are actually many forms of cancer and often several options available for treatment. The prognosis greatly depends on the type of cancer. Some cancer types can be very aggressive and treatment may not be as effective, while some cancer types can be cured. We encourage you to speak with a board-certified oncologist who will be able to provide an accurate prognosis with or without treatment.

MYTH: Chemotherapy will make my pet sick!

FACT: When many people think about chemotherapy, they think about a family member or friend who underwent the treatment and was very sick. They mistakenly think the same thing will happen to their pet while undergoing chemotherapy, which is not the case! While both veterinary and human oncology use similar drugs, the way in which they are used is fairly different. In pets, the use of chemotherapy is often not with curative intent, but rather to improve quality of life. Lower doses of chemotherapy drugs are given less frequently, therefore minimizing the side effects.

MYTH: My pet is too old for treatment.

FACT: Unfortunately, many pets will be diagnosed with cancer in their later years. At AVES, we believe that age is NOT a disease. We evaluate your pet's entire health status and will provide you with the best treatment plan based on their overall health and well-being rather than age alone.

MYTH: My pet will not be able to continue with their normal daily activities.

FACT: We want to make sure your pet continues to live a normal, active life during treatment. Generally, there are few activity restrictions during treatment, and we actually encourage that pet parents maintain normal daily routines. We also encourage you to send us pictures and videos of your pet living their best life! We LOVE seeing your pet happy during treatment!

For more Cancer Misconceptions, please visit:
AustinVets.com/10-misconceptions-about-pets-cancer/

AVES ONCOLOGY

APPOINTMENTS MONDAY - FRIDAY

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AustinVets.com

