

PARAGON'S NEW APPROACH TO POST-OP PAIN RELIEF

A specialist vet at an award-winning animal hospital in Yorkshire is introducing a new way of easing the pain of pets after surgery and for those suffering from painful medical conditions.

Liz Leece, a European and RCVS Specialist in veterinary anaesthesia and analgesia, is championing a new approach to post-operative pain management at Paragon Veterinary Referrals, in Wakefield.

She's leading a determined move away from a reliance on administering pain-killing drugs in favour of delivering precise, local relief to cut through the pain instead.

Previously, surgeons used what is known as the 'blind technique', which utilises anatomical knowledge to injects pain relief in the area of the nerves to be blocked.

Now, Paragon is using ultrasound guidance to visualise the nerves allowing the local anaesthetic to be placed directly around the nerve itself. For some nerve blocks, it is possible to block just the sensory branches of nerves, which means pets can walk better immediately after surgery while not feeling any pain.

Liz, a past president of the Association of Veterinary Anaesthetists, said: "Local analgesia is now at the forefront of our post-operative care and reliably improves the quality of a pet's recovery and reduces the need for opioid pain relief, which can cause side effects.

"We're using the latest techniques to deliver the nerve-blocking anaesthetics to exactly where they're needed.

"For many of the nerve blocks, the use of ultrasound guidance allows more precise delivery and a complete blockade of the sensory nerves.

"Which is why, here at Paragon, we've invested in state-of-the art ultrasound machine designed specifically for superficial and deep nerve blocks.

"This means we can provide more effective immediate post-operative analgesia for our patients and minimise the need for further pain killers.

"The nerves can be directly visualised and local anaesthetic directly placed around the nerve bundles."

Liz, who travels the world to lecture to vets, nurses and occasionally human anaesthetists, is keen to highlight the advantages of the increased use of local anaesthesia in the treatment of animals.

She added: "We're hoping we'll soon be able to publish some clinical research on the use of some of the blocking techniques used to demonstrate our clinical impression of their effectiveness in patient management."

As well as offering a pain management service, Paragon also provides expert care in cardiology, dermatology, diagnostic imaging, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology, orthopaedics and soft tissue surgery.

For more information on Paragon Veterinary Referrals, which is part of Linnaeus, visit www.paragonreferrals.co.uk or search for Paragon on LinkedIn or Facebook.

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