









## Canine Heartworm Disease

- Prevention
  - Monthly oral or topical preventive *OR*
  - Bi-annual injectable preventive
- Diagnosis
  - Annual antigen testing
    - Testing prior to changing preventives
    - Following lapse in preventive
    - Tandem mf testing
  - X-rays, echocardiography as indicated



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## Canine Heartworm Disease

- Treatment
  - Days 0-59
    - Exercise restriction
    - 4-week course of steroids if symptomatic
    - Monthly preventive
    - 4-week course of doxycycline
  - Days 60-91
    - Adulticidal treatment with melarsomine (Days 60, 90, 91)
    - 4-week course of steroids
    - Limit activity to cage rest & leash walks
  - Continued exercise restriction for 6-8 weeks



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## Current Practices & Challenges

- AHS-ASV working group
  - Identify current practices and needs of shelter veterinarians
  - Create practical guidelines and resources
- February 2014
  - Online survey administered to ASV membership
  - 105 responses



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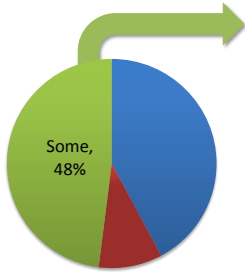
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## Current Practices & Challenges

- Diagnostic practices



- Which dogs are tested?

- Adoption candidates
- Those from endemic areas
- Specific health concerns



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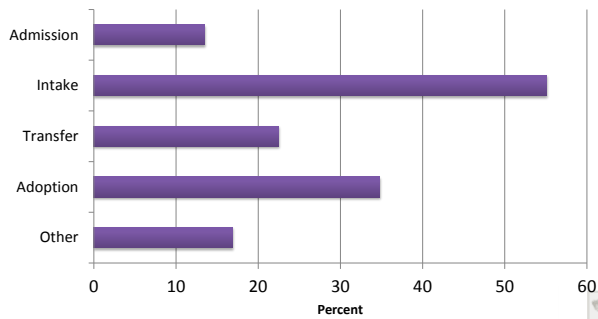
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## Current Practices & Challenges

- When does testing occur?



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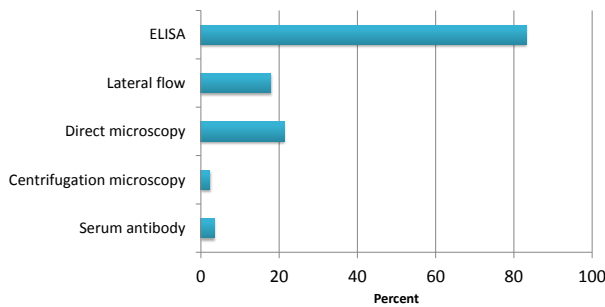
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## Current Practices & Challenges

- What type of screening test is used?



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## Designing Practical Protocols

- Extra-label use of ivermectin




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## Designing Practical Protocols

- Understand the Concerns
  - Gene mutation results in inability to move avermectins out of the brain
    - Includes ivermectin, milbemycin, moxidectin, selamectin
  - Toxic dose 4x higher than heartworm preventive dose
  - Treatment
    - Prevent further absorption
    - Supportive care
    - Time (days to weeks)




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## Designing Practical Protocols

- Mitigate the Risk
  - Ensure accurate body weight measurements
  - Dilute solution for more accurate dosing
  - Create dosing chart to minimize human error
  - Mutation most common in Collies, Australian Shepherds, Longhaired Whippets, Shetland Sheepdog
    - Selectively avoid use in at-risk breeds




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**UF** Veterinary Community Outreach Program  
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www.facebook.com/vetcop

http://sacs.vetmed.ufl.edu/programs/vcop



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## Questions?



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