



VETERINARY SPECIALTY & EMERGENCY HOSPITAL
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FALL 2022 NEWSLETTER

VRCC WELCOMES THE FALL SEASON!

After a fast, super warm, and fun-filled Summer, bring on all the Fall things! We're ready for those beautiful Colorado Fall colors, warm blankets with extra snuggles from our furries, cozy sweaters & scarves, and loads of pumpkin spice!

This issue of the VRCC newsletter highlights our Emergency and Critical Care department, one of the members of our Leadership team, and has a case study presented by our Dermatology department.

It also provides up-to-date information and news about the hospital, including current clinical trial offerings in Dermatology, and an update on Phase 1 of our new building!

Registration for our Fall DVM CE is now open! See below for more details and how to register.

Learn more about Miriam, our Inventory/Pharmacy Manager, in the Staff Highlight section just to the right on this page.

Dr. Linda Messinger with VRCC Dermatology/Allergy presents an interesting case study about a dog with an allergy flare.

Learn more about our newest Criticalist, Dr. Raj, and the VRCC Emergency & Critical Care department in the Specialty Highlight Section below.

We hope you have a warm & fuzzy Fall season!

Your VRCC Team

FALL DVM CE - REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!



VRCC is hosting our Fall DVM CE at the Denver Zoo on Wednesday, October 5th! The event will start at 5pm for registration, with dinner and lectures to follow. Lectures in: Surgery, Critical Care, & Ophthalmology will be presented. Before registration and lectures, explore the Denver Zoo from 3pm-5pm with complimentary admission for attendees! This event is free to attend;

space is reserved for 140 DVMs only, 3.0 CE credit hours offered. Registration is NOW OPEN and is on a first-come first-served basis. To register, send an email to Ruby Post at rpost@vrcc.com, or call 303-874-2053.

Thank you to our sponsors: Nutramax Laboratories, CareCredit, Elanco Animal Health, Hill's Pet Nutrition, IDEXX Laboratories, Pencil Compounding Pharmacy, Zoetis, and Antech Diagnostics!

SPECIALTY HIGHLIGHT: EMERGENCY & CRITICAL CARE

VRCC Emergency and Critical Care is available for you, your clients and patients 24/7/365.

We'd like to take this opportunity to introduce our newest Criticalist, Dr. Vibha Asokan, DVM, DACVECC, or as she prefers, Dr. Raj. With the addition of Dr. Raj, we have a criticalist available and on-site every day of the week for patients who may require that extra level of care.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT: LEADERSHIP

Miriam Cabrera Inventory & Pharmacy Manager

Miriam is the inventory and pharmacy manager for VRCC. She holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in animal science from Kansas State University and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Universidad Nacional Pedro Henriquez Urena in the Dominican Republic

Miriam grew up in Puerto Rico and is fluent in Spanish. She has worked with several dermatologists over the years. From 1994-2002 Miriam worked for the Veterinary Dermatology Center in Orlando. In 2003 she left to manage a general practice in south Florida for a few years. In her last year, she was dedicated to working with a veterinary ophthalmologist where she expanded her knowledge immensely.

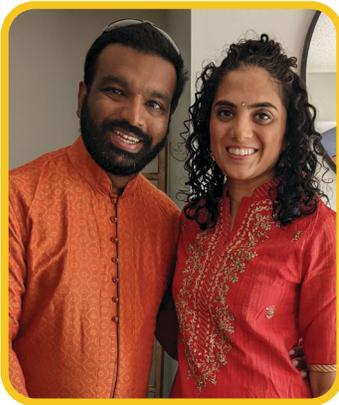
After moving to Colorado in 2006, Miriam rejoined the field of veterinary dermatology at VRCC as their practice manager. She has since changed roles at VRCC to the inventory side of veterinary medicine. Miriam is also in charge of all medical equipment at the facility. She enjoys finding out where to get inventory items from, who has what items available, what is fixable and what is not. Providing what the doctors and staff need for excellent patient care is what's most important to her about her position. She is dedicated to communication within the facility

and enjoys speaking to her coworkers as inventory requests arise from the staff.



Miriam, dressed as Winifred Sanderson, is ready for Halloween!

Miriam and her family like to take cruises as part of their family time. She and her husband are the "parents" of 2 cats and 1 dog.



Dr. Raj pictured here with her husband

Dr. Raj is originally from Arizona, but went to Purdue University for veterinary school. She then followed that up with an internship at the University of Tennessee. She worked in Chicago as an emergency doctor before joining the University of Missouri for her residency in emergency and critical care medicine. Dr. Raj became a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care in 2017.

Dr. Raj worked in the Austin area for about 4 years before recently joining the VRCC Critical Care team. When asked about how she feels about coming on board here at VRCC, Dr. Raj said, "I'm excited to be a part of such a great group of people at VRCC, and to be here for the community!"

Dr. Raj and her husband love going hiking, kayaking, and biking through the trails around town. They have enjoyed getting to know the city by going out to eat at a different local restaurant every week. She and her husband love the adventures they have encountered in Colorado with their beagle and cat.



Quigley the Beagle

VRCC Emergency & Critical Care can be reached by phoning 303-874-7387, and by emailing emergency@vrcc.com.

CLINICAL TRIALS WITH VRCC DERMATOLOGY/ALLERGY

VRCC Dermatology/Allergy is enrolling dogs with allergic dermatitis in a clinical trial evaluating a new medication. VRCC Dermatology/Allergy is also enrolling dogs with allergic ear disease into a clinical trial evaluating a new ear medication.

There are inclusion/exclusion criteria that need to be met with both clinical trials – this is very standard for clinical trials. In addition, there are financial stipends for the pet owner. Please contact the Dermatology Department at (303) 874-2078 or email us at derm@vrcc.com for more information.



VRCC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

 We appreciate when calls come in ahead of time to alert us of a patient being transferred to the Emergency service. We ask that the transferring/referring doctor be available for our DVM to chat with should any questions arise about the case. We always have an Emergency doctor on-site, so call at your convenience. VRCC Emergency can be reached by calling the main hospital number at 303-874-7387. Thank you for your partnership and referrals!

 October 16th - 22nd is National Veterinary Technician Appreciation week! Here at VRCC, we are lucky enough to have an amazing team of technicians and assistants! Veterinary technicians are a crucial part of our industry and do so much for our clients and patients. "THANK YOU!" to all Colorado veterinary technicians and assistants for all of your dedication, skills, and hard work!

 All VRCC Specialty Departments will be closed on Thursday, November 24th in observance of Thanksgiving. Specialty departments will have limited hours on Black Friday, please call for availability. VRCC Emergency is available 24/7/365.

 We are excited to share that Phase 1 of our new building is progressing wonderfully! Our new SRT unit is on-site and the construction is coming along nicely! We anticipate Phase 1 to be completed later this year.



Phase 1 - new building that will house our new SRT unit!



CASE STUDY: DERMATOLOGY/ALLERGY

Linda Messinger, DVM
Diplomate ACVD
VRCC Dermatology/Allergy



The owner /guardian of a ~7.5 year old intact male Rottweiler contacted me not too long ago regarding an allergy flare, requesting antibiotics for pruritus and facial furunculosis associated with his pet's allergies. The dog was also recently seen by Ophthalmology for various eye problems (allergic blepharitis, qualitative tear film deficiency, ptosis). Since we hadn't seen this patient in approximately a year and as his allergies had been relatively stable for years, we recommended that the patient come in for a recheck examination with Dermatology. We were able to get the patient in the next clinic day. The dog had not needed Apoquel for approximately two years up until six weeks prior to seeing me where he was restarted on Apoquel for his eye problems. His allergies had been overall well control with only sublingual allergen-specific immunotherapy for two years. Apoquel was of minimal help for his eye problems and his skin flared despite being on Apoquel. On examination, this patient had alopecia and hyperpigmentation caudal to his nasal planum, generalized scale on the torso and head, a dull hair coat, mild generalized hypotrichosis and greyish coalescing small vesicles on his dorsal head and cheeks. A tragic facial expression was also noted. On video otoscopic exam, he had brown waxy discharge AS>>AD. Many of his skin lesions looked atypical for an allergy flare and upon further questioning, the owner had also noted that the dog had progressive lethargy and a difficult time with weight loss. Weight gain had been noted when compared to the prior visit, although the owner stated the dog had been spending time at his grandparent's home where he was often overfed. Skin scrapings were negative for mites. Based on the history and dermatologic examination, I did not feel this was a typical allergy flare for him and recommended thyroid hormone testing (Michigan State University). Results were consistent with hypothyroidism (see below). Based on these results, the patient was started on thyroid hormone supplementation and at the time of writing this, is due for post pill thyroid testing in about a week. Sublingual allergen-specific immunotherapy was continued for his atopic dermatitis.

This case is interesting and emphasizes the importance of recheck examinations. We are all aware of how busy we have been in veterinary medicine and it would have been perhaps easier to simply prescribe antibiotics per the owner's request. However, the diagnosis of hypothyroidism would have then been missed or delayed. Many allergic patients do flare with skin infection, so it was not unreasonable to assume from the email conversation with the owner/guardian that this was an allergy flare. However, historical facts did not necessarily correlate with an allergy flare, i.e. poor response to Apoquel in a patient whose allergy flares typically responded to Apoquel; in addition the patient had not needed Apoquel for two years. When treating hypothyroidism with thyroid hormone supplementation, lethargy and metabolism tend to respond prior to the skin/coat changes. This patient's atopic dermatitis had been overall well managed with daily sublingual allergen-specific immunotherapy. Allergen-specific immunotherapy is considered the only therapy for atopic dermatitis that is disease modifying in that it can change the course of the disease as well as treat the disease. There are two main forms prescribed in the United States: subcutaneous and sublingual; these are overall considered safe long-term. It is believed that allergen-specific immunotherapy may decrease the risk of the atopic dermatitis progressing to a more severe form of the disease. It is also believed that the earlier allergen-specific immunotherapy is started, the better the outcome. Although we often recommend waiting to allergy test until the patient has been exposed to all allergy seasons (especially spring, summer and fall)—so at least 9-12 months of age. Immunotherapy is a lesson in patience as it can take several months to show efficacy during which other allergy therapies may be prescribed. A recent retrospective study revealed that dogs receiving concurrent corticosteroids had a poorer response to allergen-specific immunotherapy when compared to those who had received concurrent Apoquel or Atopica.

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at lmessinger@vrcc.com, or 303-874-2078. Thank you for reading this and have a great day!

Procedure		Ref Range	Units
Total Thyroxine (TT4) (CLIA)	2 L	[9-52]	nmol/L
Total Triiodothyronine (TT3) (RIA)	0.6 L	[0.8-2.1]	nmol/L
Free T4 by dialysis (RIA)	2 L	[6-42]	pmol/L
T4 Autoantibody (RIA)	14	[0-20]	%
T3 Autoantibody (RIA)	7	[0-10]	%
Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (CLIA)	0.62 H	[0.00-0.58]	ng/mL
Thyroglobulin Autoantibody (ELISA) *	62 H	[0-35]	%

