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*Editor in Chief*

EDITOR'S LETTER

# Life and Death Decisions

Since its origin in 121 AD, the term "euthanasia" has evolved significantly. Derived from Greek, it combines the root words "eu," meaning good, and "thanatos," meaning death. The first recorded use of the term is attributed to Roman historian Suetonius, describing how emperors sought "euthanasia" when facing death. To Suetonius, euthanasia meant a peaceful end with loved ones present, affairs in order, and acceptance of death. Euthanizing a pet for medical reasons has long been seen as a way to ease their suffering. However, **euthanizing a dog or cat due to behavioral issues** is a complex and contentious topic; the debate swings between saving all animals and euthanizing those with risks. In reality, it's never that straightforward. There's a significant stigma and judgment against pet owners who euthanize their animals due to behavior issues, as well as the veterinary medical staff involved in these cases. Animal welfare remains a key concern, and attention is now given equally to the wellbeing of both clients and veterinary teams. This topic is expertly reviewed in this issue by Drs. Melissa North and Margaret Gruen.

## WHAT WE'RE READING

*In each issue, a member of our Editorial Advisory Board will share a recent open access publication, including their key takeaways and its practical conclusion.*

### Asymmetric Multifocal Neurological Signs in a Dog With Eunatremic, Eukalemic Hypoadrenocorticism With Severe Hypoglycemia

*Morris CAD, Donaldson RE.* J Vet Emerg Crit Care (San Antonio). *doi:10.1111/vec.70019*

**WHAT WAS INVESTIGATED?** This case report describes a 7-year-old neutered male poodle with "atypical" Addison's disease. The dog was severely ill after 2 days of progressive lethargy and depression. The physical examination showed a hypotensive dog that was recumbent with a marked alteration in consciousness. The dog's condition was initially assessed as diffuse brain injury possibly due to a metabolic dysfunction.

**WHAT WAS FOUND?** Findings included severe hypoglycemia, hyperlactatemia, and metabolic acidemia. The serum sodium and potassium concentrations were normal. There was mild azotemia. An adrenocorticotropic hormone stimulation test showed 0.1 and 0.1 µg/dL values on the pre- and postsamples, respectively. The dog was treated with dexamethasone for atypical hypoadrenocorticism, and it received repeated doses of parenteral glucose that led to a slow recovery.

**TAKE-HOME POINTS**

- Atypical Addison's disease in the dog can present with severe hypoglycemic encephalopathy with normal serum sodium and potassium concentrations.
- This type of damage will not respond immediately to restoration of euglycemia and will require days to weeks to regain improved or normal cerebral function.

*— Michael Schaer, DVM, DACVIM (SAIM), DACVECC*

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**CORRECTION**

The article titled "What's New in Otitis Externa Treatment Options" in the September/October 2025 issue listed in TABLE 1 the product EASOTIC as containing the glucocorticoid hydrocortisone. EASOTIC contains hydrocortisone aceponate. We regret the error.