



SKILLMAN - (214) 887-1400

1910 Skillman Street
Dallas, TX 75206

OAK CLIFF - (214) 939-1600

1021 Fort Worth Avenue
Dallas, TX 75208

WHITE ROCK - (214) 324-1500

7446 East Grand Avenue
Dallas, TX 75214

CANINE BLADDER TUMORS

Dr. Lindsay Shipp

There are many different types of bladder masses. However, the most common type of mass is called a Transitional Cell Carcinoma (TCCs). TCCs are unfortunately an aggressive type of cancer that is not curable and without therapy causes significant quality of life complications. There are other types of masses that have a much better prognosis, but they are not as common.

Bladder masses are more frequently seen in older dogs, but fortunately are not a very frequent occurrence. Terriers, specifically Scottish Terriers are predisposed to TCCs.

Symptoms:

- Blood in urine
- Straining to urinate
- Unable to urinate
- Frequent urinary tract infections

Diagnostics:

- Urinalysis – this allows your veterinarian to screen for more common causes like UTIs, prostate infections, or bladder stones.
- Radiographs – Bladder masses are generally not seen very well on radiographs (x-rays). However, x-rays do allow you veterinary to see the more common types of bladder stones and generally look at the size of the prostate
- Ultrasound – This allows your veterinarian to look inside the bladder to look for masses, blood clots, and bladder stones. Your veterinarian can also look at the prostate at the same time. Unfortunately, some blood clots can look suspiciously like bladder masses.
- Cell Sampling – Cell sampling is a good way to get a definitive diagnosis. Unlike many other masses, bladder masses can be risky to sample with a needle. The safest way to sample these masses is by using a urinary catheter. This is easier to do in a male dog.
- BRAF-positive genetic screening – this a very specialized test to screen for a common mutation that occurs in TCC tumors. It is a less invasive test that requires a large sample of urine. Typically, this test is ordered by an oncologist.

Treatment:

- Surgical Removal – depending on the location of the mass in the bladder wall, they can sometimes be surgically removed and sent to the lab for testing. Certain locations of the bladder cannot be removed. Unfortunately, the worst type of bladder tumors (Transitional Cell Carcinomas) are commonly located in a portion of the bladder that cannot be surgically removed.
- Chemotherapy – there are a few different types of chemotherapy that can be used specifically for Transitional Cell Carinomas. None will cure this tumor, but it can suppress further growth and offer palliative therapy to help prolong quality life.
 - SIDE EFFECTS: Veterinary medicine does not allow for the aggressive chemotherapy protocols used in people that can more significant side effects. Very few side effects are appreciated, most dogs have NONE!
- Radiation Therapy – these protocols help to decrease inflammation and other symptoms associated with the bladder tumor, but NOT cure.
 - SIDE EFFECTS: Radiation irritation on skin or bladder wall.
- NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory) – Piroxicam – this drug is commonly used to help reduce the inflammation associated with bladder tumors and has anti-tumor activity. Other NSAIDs are believed to have similar effects, but not as many studies have been done.
 - SIDE EFFECTS: these drugs can cause stomach ulcers when used chronically. Using an anti-acid with these medications can help reduce that risk. 