

Complications associated with anaesthesia in small animal practice in Nairobi County, Kenya.

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Abstract

A questionnaire was administered to 35 registered veterinarians involved in small animal practice in Nairobi County, Kenya, seeking information on anaesthesia-related complications, as part of a larger study on anaesthesia practices among these practitioners.

The response rate was 74.29%. Of these respondents, 34.62% were involved in purely small animal practice while 61.54% were involved in both large and small animal practice. On average, 5 ± 3.53 dogs and 2 ± 1.39 cats were anaesthetized per week. 42.31% of the respondents reported to have never encountered any anaesthesia related complication. Of those who reported anaesthesia-related complications (57.69%), the most common complication they encountered was hypothermia (26.92%) followed by death (15.38%); apnea (15.38%); vomiting (11.54%); prolonged onset of analgesia (7.69%); inadequate analgesia (7.69%); muscle spasms (7.69%); prolonged recovery (3.85%); violent recovery (3.85%); tachycardia (3.85%); shock (3.85%) and; cardiopulmonary failure (3.85%). The study concluded that the occurrence of these complications could be attributed in part to the constraints faced by the practitioners including lack of knowledge on some anaesthesia techniques, lack of anaesthesia equipment and unavailability of specific drug antidotes. Furthermore, there is need to undertake a more detailed study to establish the incidence of these anaesthesia-related complications and the associated risk factors in small animal practices in Kenya.