Diagnostic utility of abdominal ultrasonography in dogs with chronic vomiting.

Abstract:
Chronic vomiting is a common problem in dogs that has many causes. Ultrasonographic descriptions of many gastrointestinal (GI) diseases have been published. However, diagnostic utility of ultrasonography in dogs with chronic vomiting has not been investigated. Diagnostic utility of abdominal ultrasound will be highest in dogs with GI neoplasia and lowest in those with inflammatory disorders. Eighty-nine pet dogs with chronic vomiting. Medical records were reviewed and the contribution of abdominal ultrasound to the clinical diagnosis was subjectively scored. In 68.5% of dogs, the reviewers thought that the same diagnosis would have been reached without performing ultrasonography. In 22.5% of dogs, the ultrasound examination was considered to be vital or beneficial to the diagnosis. Univariable analysis identified that increased diagnostic utility was associated with increasing age, a greater number of vomiting episodes per week, presence of weight loss, a greater percentage of lost body weight, and a final diagnosis of GI lymphoma or gastric adenocarcinoma. However, multivariate analysis only identified increasing age and a final diagnosis of gastric adenocarcinoma or GI lymphoma to be associated with increased diagnostic utility. In 12.4% of dogs, additional benefits of ultrasonography to case management, excluding the contribution to the vomiting problem, were identified. The
diagnostic utility of abdominal ultrasonography was high in 27% of dogs. The presence of factors that are associated with high diagnostic utility is an indication to perform abdominal ultrasonography in dogs with chronic vomiting.