

Small breed dog with acute neck pain, phantom scratching, cerebellar signs

Recommended Diagnostics

- CBC/Serum chemistry
- Toxoplasmosis titers (baseline and convalescent)
- Blood pressure
- T4 level
- Cervical radiographs
- 4DX Snap test + RMSF titers (baseline and convalescent)
- Consider distemper testing

Treatment

After ruling out toxicities such as lead, ethylene glycol, illicit drugs, insecticides, avermectins, etc. treat empirically for infectious causes and possible Chiari malformation with or without syringomyelia/herniation

- Clindamycin (10-12 mg/kg PO q12 hours for 4 weeks or TMS 15 mg/kg PO q12 hours for 4 weeks) for possible toxoplasmosis.
- Doxycycline for possible rickettsial meningitis (5 mg/kg PO BID)
- Gabapentin (10 mg/kg PO TID) and diazepam (0.1 to 0.2 mg/kg PO TID) for pain/muscle spasms
- Omeprazole (1 mg/kg PO SID) to decrease intracranial pressure
- Anticonvulsants if needed

Cage rest

*If no improvement and owners cannot afford additional diagnostics, try prednisone at 2 mg/kg daily for possible meningitis of unknown etiology. Discuss risk of worsening an undiagnosed condition, particularly an infection. Dose of 0.5 mg/kg daily should relieve Chiari pain. *

