



Journal Update
Peeps!!

Should you biopsy it? Yes!

Assessing the clinical relevance of surgical biopsies of abdominal lymph nodes in cats: 51 cases

This was a retrospective study looking at the 60 surgical lymph node biopsies as well as comparing the results to 19/51 cases that had concurrent cytology. It is not uncommon to see enlarged lymph nodes in both inflammatory and neoplastic conditions. As such cytology or histology is needed to determine benign versus malignant lymphadenopathy. Cytology has its advantages but can also be a challenge to perform on abdominal lymph nodes via ultrasound.



What did they find?

Cytology (19 cats)

- Approximately 40% of the cases were reactive. 1 lymphoma case was confirmed, 1 had pyogranulomatous inflammation and 1 had neutrophilic inflammation.
- Approximately 40% were inconclusive.

Histology (51 cats - 60 lymph nodes)

- 9/44 cases had lymphadenopathy identified at surgery that was not noted at ultrasound.
- Not unexpectedly most biopsies (41/60) came back as reactive hyperplasia.
- Of the inconclusive cytology cases, 2 had metastatic neoplasia.
- Of the nodes deemed reactive on cytology, 2 were confirmed as lymphoma on biopsy.
- The single FNA identified as lymphoma was confirmed at histology.
- Overall neoplasia was confirmed in 10 cats, 7 with lymphoma, 3 with mast cell tumour and one with metastatic jejunal adenocarcinoma.
- Histology excluded lymphatic involvement in 6 cats with confirmed intra-abdominal neoplasia.



- Abdominal US was performed in 50 cases and guided the initial surgical plan with respect to biopsy needs.
- Of interest, the most common primary diagnoses were IBD (17) followed by lymphoma (10), cholangiohepatitis (5) feline eosinophilic sclerosing fibroplasia (4), septic peritonitis (4), jejunal ulcers (4) and abdominal MCT (3). Other neoplasia identified included colonic carcinoma(1) and renal carcinoma (1).
- There were **no** intraoperative or post operative complications noted in association with lymph node biopsy.

The comparatively smaller sample size of cytology cases is a limiting factor to the study in addition to its retrospective nature.

Take Home Message

Surgical biopsy of grossly enlarged or normal abdominal lymph nodes provides additional information to lymph node cytology in cats and in the majority of cases is associated with a positive histological diagnosis!



Reference:

Corrêa LM, Demetriou JL. Retrospective assessment of the clinical relevance of surgical biopsies of abdominal lymph nodes in cats: 51 cases (2014-2018). *J Feline Med Surg*. 2020 Dec;22(12):1168-1175. doi: 10.1177/1098612X20916387. Epub 2020 May 18. PMID: 32419573