

Dog Gone Movie Review

Clinical Signs

Gonker's first signs included lethargy (not wanting to greet the family or play) and inappetence (ignoring the spilled pie and last night's dinner). There was no history of GI signs, pu/pd, weakness, tremors, etc.

*There was a scene demonstrating stress from the thunderstorm – could be totally unrelated but may have been a trigger if he was already on the verge of a crisis

Hospitalization

Once at the vet clinic he was treated with IVF, but the rate seemed slow. Ideally, he should have been bolused at least a ¼ shock dose (80-90 mL/kg/hr) to treat his presumed hypovolemic shock. They also should have had ECG and BP monitoring.

Consult with Owners

Vet: "Addison's disease is when the body fails to produce enough glucocorticoids and the body falls into adrenal insufficiency" – this statement from the vet is not completely incorrect but is describing atypical Addison's disease since (typical) Addison's disease involves a deficiency of mineralocorticoids and glucocorticoids. Dogs with atypical Addison's disease, are far less likely to present in an Addisonian crisis and Gonker would have likely had chronic GI signs. *I don't think atypical Addisonian dogs really have the "Addisonian Crisis" but I suppose if their GI signs were bad enough and they lost enough fluid volume they could also go into a hypovolemic shock??

Vet: "Causes Pain, low BP, can lapse into a coma" – the "coma" is probably hypovolemic shock with collapse and poor mentation?

Vet: "Needs a shot every 30 days" – the premise of this is true, Gonker will need a DOCP injection about every 25 days, but this can be extended and based on the individual and careful electrolyte monitoring. He will also need a daily dose of prednisone which was not discussed and Gonker was definitely not getting this in the wild.

Vet: "It's 50/50 he makes it through the night" – This was a little dramatic, if an Addisonian crisis is addressed in a timely manner, the prognosis is great and the dogs usually bounce back quickly

Vet: "I've never seen a rebound like this in any dog" – most dogs do rebound with supportive care

Miscellaneous

The dad makes it seem like it's the son's fault for not noticing the signs – many of the signs may not be obvious to owners (waxing/waning GI signs, lethargy, etc.) and the first big sign may be a full crisis

Food that can help with an Addisonian crisis – tailored nutrition is a great way to support Addison's disease but is not able to replace mineralocorticoid and glucocorticoid supplementation

The reunion was cute but in reality, I think Gonker would have looked a little more “rough”

Final Thoughts

Overall, this movie was a mediocre representation of Addison's disease medically, but I think it captured the public's attention and may have introduced them to this disease. As a side note, I liked how they incorporated different people and the memories/attachment they have with their own dogs which lead them to want to find Gonker even more. It is always a good reminder of the impact animals have on lives of the people who own them and what a privilege it is that we get to help care for them and foster that relationship!