



ACVIM

As far as you want to go.

HEROES IN *Medicine*

The patients walking through the doors of Colorado State University's Animal Cancer Center for treatment may be on four legs, but the discoveries resulting from their appointments are helping children live longer lives.

"Cancer is the leading cause of death in dogs and cats," said Dr. Stephen J. Withrow, DVM, an American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM) Board-certified Oncologist who specializes in limb-sparing.

Limb-sparing is a surgical procedure which is an alternative to amputation for dogs being treated for osteosarcoma, a malignant tumor of the long bones. "Osteosarcoma is ten times more prevalent in dogs than in humans and it progresses much faster, making the dogs a relevant model for determining side effects and benefits for bone tumors in humans," said Dr. Withrow.

The traditional limb-sparing procedure involves removing the "bad bone" and replacing it with bone from another dog. The ultimate goal of the procedure is to get four good functioning legs on the ground while also improving the quality of life for the dog, said Dr. Withrow.

The success rate for the procedure is around 75 percent. The procedure fails when there is a severe infection, local tumor recurrence, or implant failure. Dog owners from across the country, and even globe, travel to the CSU Animal Cancer Center for limb-sparing and other cancer procedures, totaling almost two thousand new patients each year.

Human medicine is picking up on the procedure as well. Limb-sparing treatment is now widely adopted at cancer centers, significantly increasing the likelihood children diagnosed with osteosarcoma will keep their arms and legs and be cured.

"Clients are very willing to have their dogs participate in clinical trials which is how we can get to the next level of research quickly," said Dr. Withrow. "Breakthroughs are more likely to reach human clinics if tested in companion animals first. The animal owners and the patients are the real heroes."



This campaign is part of our commitment to recognize the exemplary work you do that advances us all. Find out more by visiting our brand new website at www.ACIVM.org. For more information on research initiatives, visit www.ACIVMFoundation.org.

1997 Wadsworth Blvd., Suite A, Lakewood, CO 80214
303-231-9933 | 800-245-9081 (US or Canada)

www.ACIVM.org

