



The Ohio State University Veterinary Medical Center

Update for Veterinarians



Veterinary Medical Center— Columbus

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Farm Animals and
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Veterinary Medical Center— Dublin

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Male dog rallies with investigational medication

A case managed by Companion Animal Internal Medicine specialists at the Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center (VMC) shows how investigating proven therapies in humans may advance ways to address complex health conditions in animals.

Such was the case with Finn Lambert, a five-year-old male mixed-breed dog referred to the VMC in September 2024. His primary care veterinarian, Aaron Buck, DVM, discovered that Finn had no platelets after being vaccinated. When his owners, Katie Lambert and JC Mautino arrived with Finn, he had a patch of bruising under his right forearm and pinpoint gum bleeding, a sign of the body's inability to clot blood.

The Companion Animal Internal Medicine service team, including **Jessica Quimby, DVM, PhD, DACVIM (SAIM)** clinical professor and vice chair of Research in Clinical Sciences, and third-year resident **John Rowe, DVM, MS**, evaluated Finn and confirmed the diagnosis of immune-mediated thrombocytopenia.

During his five-day VMC hospital stay, Finn responded well to initial treatment of multiple medications, including steroids, to suppress his immune system as well as

From the Director

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In our Spring edition of *Update for Veterinarians*, we share patient cases that demonstrate how our specialists are successfully addressing complex cases with unique and innovative approaches to patient care.

In Companion Animal medicine, the use of an investigational medication has restored a patient's platelets. In Equine Surgery, clinicians have used ablation surgery to treat complications from colic, and a novel peptide to promote wound healing. These cases

illustrate the innovative and exciting link between human and veterinary medicine.

Finally, we are also happy to note the recent launch of our Equine Internal Medicine service's web-based "rounds" for referring veterinarians.

We are grateful for your continued collaboration and partnership and welcome the opportunity to consult on these and other services.

Karin Zuckerman, MHSA, MBA
Assistant Dean for Clinical Programs
Director, Veterinary Medical Center



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
VETERINARY MEDICAL CENTER

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Investigational medication - continued from page 1

a chemotherapy agent, vincristine. Finn went home, but relapsed a month later, returning in November 2024 to the VMC, where he stayed for four days. The team adjusted his medications and he went home again having a positive response to these adjustments.

During Finn's second hospitalization, the team discussed reevaluating their approach beyond the steroid therapy, says Dr. Rowe, who with **Molly Bechtold, DVM, DACVIM (SAIM)**, assistant professor – clinical, discussed with Katie the possible use of Romipolostim (brand name Nplate), which directs the body's bone marrow to create platelets. The only other option was for Finn to have his spleen removed, an invasive procedure requiring extensive recovery time.

First documented in 2016 to be used in dogs lacking platelets, Nplate has been used in humans as an FDA approved therapy since 2008. The treatment is administered by injection under the skin and has shown great promise in people, Dr. Rowe says.

In January 2025, Finn returned to the VMC after yet another relapse, and in agreement with Katie, and in consultation with the VMC



pharmacist, the team gave Finn the Nplate injection.

In humans, the medication is given regularly every week or every other week, Dr. Rowe says, “but there’s some evidence in dogs that single injections might get them over this hump of a relapse and be able to then help control their disease process.”

Since Finn received the treatment, he is on less medication, no longer

requires steroid medication, has a normal platelet count, and is living a normal life at home, says Dr. Rowe. “One of the big goals with these patients is to get them off steroid medication for the rest of their life.”

Finn remains on a single, oral medication, leflunomide, which decreases inflammation and controls Finn's autoimmune disease. “In the long term, that’s going to be a much better situation for him than needing to be on steroids for the rest of his life,” Dr. Rowe adds. To his knowledge, he says, no veterinary hospital in the United States has used this medication before that is published in the existing veterinary literature.

Dr. Rowe encourages primary care veterinarians to reach out to the VMC's Companion Animal Internal Medicine team for a consult or any questions they might have about a patient, especially ones with immune-mediated diseases that require life-long ongoing care.

For Katie, having Finn “back to his normal self” is thrilling. “He’s happy and energetic,” she says.

“We couldn’t be more grateful to Dr. Rowe and to the team at Ohio State.”

Innovative wound healing research earns Accelerator Award

Two researchers from the Ohio State College of Medicine who developed a novel peptide that promotes skin wound healing in mice — and was later successfully applied to horses at the VMC's Galbreath Equine Center — have received an Ohio State Accelerator Award to advance commercialization of the technology.

Thomas Cherpes, DVM, MD, associate professor, and Rodolfo Vicetti Miguel, MD, assistant professor of research, both in the College of Medicine's Department

of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, worked in collaboration with **Hilary Rice, DVM, MS, DACVS-LA**, and **Caitlin Moreno, DVM, MS, DACVS-LA**, assistant professors in Equine Surgery.

“Our collaboration allowed us to bridge the gap between lab discovery and real-world effectiveness,” Cherpes says. “Many horses are negatively impacted by skin wounds, and because horses and humans use a similar mechanism for wound repair, our technology may also have applications for humans.”



Ablation surgery successfully addresses complex colic

Colic is common among horses and is initially treated with supportive care efforts, including pain management, IV or oral fluids, gastric decompression, as well as gentle walking to stimulate gut movement. In a few cases, however, complications with colic can lead to more serious issues that require surgery.

Such was the case in September 2025, when Sweet Mocha, a two-year-old Standardbred filly racehorse, presented to the VMC Equine Emergency and Critical Care (EECC) service with signs of abdominal pain. She was referred by Barry Carter, DVM, who looked at the filly about a week after owner Greg Luther purchased her at a public auction.

The EECC team's initial assessment, which included an ultrasound of the abdomen and examination per rectum, caused concern for colic as the result of a displacement of the large colon. On the ultrasound exam, there were problems in viewing the kidney, says **Hilary Rice, DVM, MS, DACVS-LA**, assistant professor of Equine Surgery at the VMC's Galbreath Equine Center.

The team could only see the colon up next to the spleen, and it obscured the view of the kidney on ultrasound," she says. They initiated medical management of IV fluids, oral fluids, and injection with phenylephrine to help shrink the size of the spleen and allow the colon to slide out of the space where it was entrapped. However, the horse continued to show signs of discomfort.

With the owner's agreement, the team performed an exploratory laparotomy, which confirmed this type of large colon displacement, called a nephrosplenic entrapment. "Horses with this condition can be more prone to this entrapment recurring" says Dr. Rice.

Several days following the exploratory laparotomy, and with the owner's agreement, the Equine Surgery team performed a standing nephrosplenic space ablation surgery, a minimally invasive laparoscopic procedure involving three one- to two-centimeter skin incisions in the left flank. The team used a barbed suture to close the space between the spleen and kidney.

The procedure has several benefits, Dr. Rice says. No general anesthesia is required, so recovery is smoother and quicker than open surgery. It's also relatively painless and it prevents the colon from getting stuck back in the same space.

"We always tell owners that this doesn't mean that the colon can't displace in other locations, but it should prevent this type of displacement again in the future," she says. "Being able to prevent that and have horses have fewer episodes of colic that require general anesthesia is great for the horse."

Dr. Carter, the referring veterinarian, says working with the VMC Equine team went really well. "The client communication with Ohio State was also outstanding," he says.

Sweet Mocha was discharged seven days after her initial admission. Aftercare at home included a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory and stall rest to recover from the laparotomy. Following a month of stall rest, Sweet Mocha was turned out into a small paddock for another month before gradually returning to exercise beginning 60 days after the initial surgery.

Veterinary Medical Center Continuing Education

New! Regional CE Conferences for 2026

- May 15** SE Ohio Regional Small Animal and Farm Animal CE Conference
Athens, Ohio
- June 5** NE Ohio Regional Small Animal & Equine CE Conference
Wooster, OH
- Aug 21** Annual Small Animal CE Conference
VMC Auditorium, Columbus, OH

Additional CE dates coming soon!

For details, please visit vet.osu.edu/education/continuing-education

New!

Monthly Zoom-based Equine Case Rounds

Join us on the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. for case rounds in equine medicine!

Contact Teresa Burns, DVM, PhD, DACVIM (LAIM) for the Zoom link:

burns.402@osu.edu
or **515-451-4056**.

Faculty Spotlight - Laura Dunbar Hostnik, DVM, MS, DACVIM



Equine specialist **Laura Dunbar Hostnik, DVM**, fondly recalls childhood visits from her hometown of Durham, North Carolina, to see her father's cousin, who had a mixed animal veterinary practice in upstate New York. She looked forward to the visits, particularly shadowing him. "Of course, he had lots of great stories," she says.

She attended Clemson University, where a joint program with the University of Georgia Large Animal Hospital exposed her to both large animal and internal medicine. Dr. Hostnik went on to receive her DVM at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, followed by an internship at Rhinebeck Equine in New York. She completed her Internal Medicine residency at Ohio State in 2016.

Today she is an associate professor of Equine Internal Medicine and Neonatology at the VMC's Galbreath Equine Center.

"Most of the day is typically procedures for our inpatients," she says, which may include rechecking ultrasounds, endoscopies of either the upper airway or the stomach, or doing neurologic exams. Some of the more common issues the team sees in patients include colic, and in spring, neonatal cases that may involve dystocia or post-birth complications.

Other Internal Medicine service team members include Ramiro Toribio, DVM, MS, PhD, DACVIM, section head; Teresa Burns, DVM, PhD, DACVIM, associate professor; and Eric Schroeder, DVM, MS, DAVECC, DACVIM, associate professor, along with four internal medicine residents, rotating interns and a service technician. Dr. Hostnik says that updated endoscopy equipment and ultrasound have aided the service teaching and practice.

She adds that the service has also recently launched a Zoom-based monthly equine medicine rounds with referring veterinarians, which will provide more opportunities for regular dialogue with the Internal Medicine team (see page 3).

Meanwhile, Dr. Hostnik encourages referring veterinarians to call the Internal Medicine team to discuss cases. "That's really valuable for us all," she says, "but I also enjoy hearing what they're doing, and I learn, too, from cases that they're dealing with."

Welcome New Faculty



David Scott Rutherford, BVMS, CertSAS, DipECVS, FRCVS
Assistant Professor - Small Animal Orthopedic Surgery

Dr. Rutherford, a small animal orthopedic surgeon, joined the VMC in February after serving as founding director of Frank, Pet Surgeons, a surgical referral hospital that he opened in 2018 in Leeds, United Kingdom.

After Rutherford graduated from the University of Glasgow in 2001, he served as a Temporary Veterinary Inspector. He then spent six years in general mixed animal practices, including a practice in New Zealand,

before completing a European College of Veterinary Surgeons (ECVS) residency. He became board certified in small animal surgery in 2013 and a Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)-recognized specialist in 2014. Afterward, he worked in multidisciplinary referral hospitals in the UK before opening Frank, Pet Surgeons.

His clinical interests include joint replacement, complex fracture management, and angular limb deformities. His research interests are meniscal injuries, humeral intracondylar fissure, AI for complication/prognosis prediction, and mechanical testing of implants.

Departures

Dr. Emily McConnelly, Dublin Urgent Care
Dr. Caitlin Moreno, Equine Surgery

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