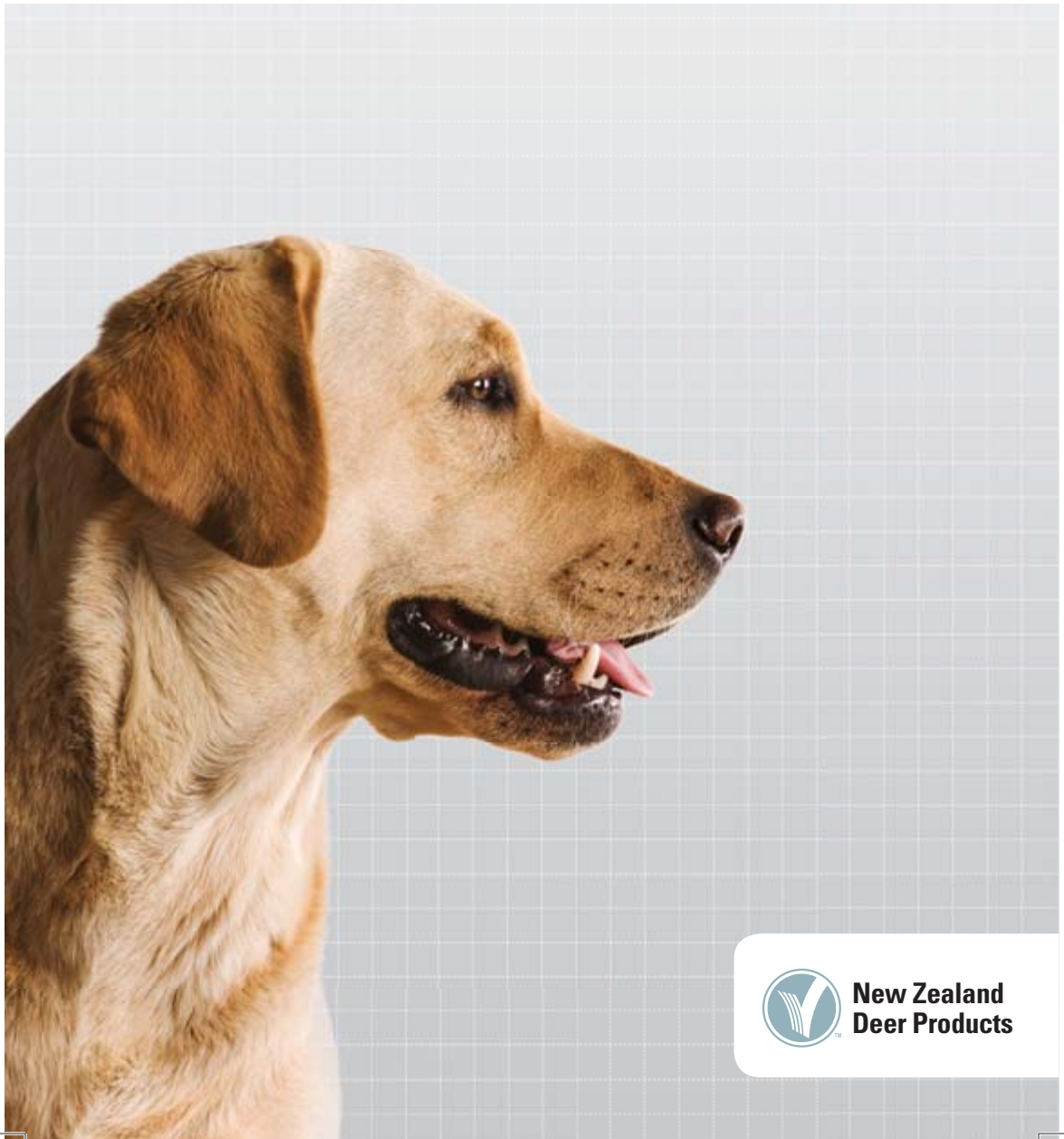
Made by
nature,
supported
by science.

DeerVelvet

Veterinary information



New Zealand
Deer Products

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A scientific foundation

A double-blind, placebo-controlled study in Canada[1] revealed significant health benefits for dogs affected by osteoarthritis. The trial, involving 38 dogs, used a combination of clinical tests and owners' assessment. The authors concluded that the benefits of deer velvet for the dogs was demonstrated objectively and subjectively, and that treatment with deer velvet should be considered in the treatment of canine osteoarthritis.

Two other laboratory-based trials with rodents using extracts from velvet antler have demonstrated a clear anti-inflammatory effect.[2]

More recently a draft report from a Massey University client study into the effects of deer velvet on immune function, completed in August 2008, has shown further positive results. Effects of velvet antler consumption recorded in a trial group of dogs included:

- significantly enhanced lymphocyte proliferation in response to lipopolysaccharide
- significantly enhanced peripheral blood leukocyte phagocytic activity
- no negative effects in terms of expression of cell surface markers (an indicator of immunodeficiency).
- The draft report concluded that consumption of velvet antler could significantly improve resistance and ability to fight disease in dogs.

Where does deer velvet fit in?

There is no question that NSAIDs can offer effective treatment for severe osteoarthritis in dogs. However, as would be the case with humans, immediately committing 20 percent of the population to a lifelong regime of NSAID treatment can be a big call. Before pulling out the 'big guns' such as NSAIDs, why not try

treatment with deer velvet at the early stages of osteoarthritis in conjunction with other lifestyle management changes? The option of introducing an NSAID later will still be available.

Owners are increasingly looking beyond conventional treatments for chronic conditions in their pets and appreciate the opportunity to consider a broader range of options. Deer velvet fits well into this range. As a natural therapy backed by robust research, this choice will appeal to many pet owners.

For your practice, therapies based on New Zealand deer velvet provide an exciting alternative and add to the toolbox of options you can offer your clients.

Canine osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is one of the most common canine diseases and one of the greatest causes of chronic pain and lameness in dogs. It is thought to affect more than 8 million[3] dogs in the United States. In the United Kingdom about one in ten[4] purebred dogs requires treatment for clinical osteoarthritis, although difficulties in identifying the disease suggest the true proportion is higher. Another estimate suggests that arthritis affects 20 percent[5] of adult dogs.

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease resulting from the deterioration of joint cartilage following stress on joints over time. It can affect any dog at any age, but is most common in older large-breed dogs. Some breeds of dogs are more susceptible than others, but excess body weight, poor nutrition and trauma can also greatly contribute to the problem.

The damage caused by osteoarthritis is not reversible, and there is no cure available short of joint replacement.

The pain and inflammation caused by this condition can be managed, however. One common strategy is treatment with a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID).

While this can be very effective in the alleviation of symptoms, this could mark the beginning of many years of regular NSAID treatment.

Like any pharmaceutical drugs, NSAIDs may carry risks. Some reactions may be serious, and can result in permanent damage or even death.

Appropriate 'lifestyle' changes including weight loss, improved nutrition and exercise (within the constraints of the condition) could reduce the impact of the disease, but there is also an exciting alternative available for clients seeking a more natural approach to treating their animals.

New Zealand Deer Velvet: New research proves effectiveness

The use of deer velvet as a nutraceutical can provide effective relief from joint problems caused by osteoarthritis in dogs. As well as providing the anti-inflammatory response required, deer velvet provides other long-term benefits for the animal's general wellbeing.

New studies give scientific backing to what has been known and practised in Asia for centuries. A recent Canadian trial[6] showed that dogs suffering from osteoarthritis and treated over a 60-day period with deer velvet enjoyed a significant improvement in freedom of movement and vitality.

The benefits

In human health, deer velvet has been used in Asia, especially China, for more than 2,000 years as a tonic to promote overall health and strengthen the body. Benefits are focused around improving blood cell production, enhanced functioning of the immune system and promoting cardiovascular health.

As research begins to reveal the processes behind these health benefits, there is increasing interest from outside Asia in the potential for deer velvet as a dietary supplement that complements Western medicine. New Zealand athletes including the Powered by velvet.org.nz adventure racing team (placed 10th in the recent world championships), triathlete Julia Grant and Olympic swimmer Willie Benson use deer velvet to reduce inflammation and promote rapid recovery following training and competition.

The benefits of deer velvet are now being increasingly recognised for companion animals, as demand for complementary therapies grows. In companion animals, the anti-inflammatory and immune function benefits of deer velvet help in the treatment of osteoarthritis, and assist with recovery following surgery.

What is deer velvet?

Deer velvet is the name given to deer antlers during their rapid growth phase. It is unique, being the only mammalian tissue that re-grows completely each year. The cartilaginous core, connective tissue and skin are supplied with blood vessels and nerves as the antlers grow. Complex proteins and lipids found in deer velvet are likely to be the most biologically active components and confer the greatest health benefits. Research to better understand these processes is ongoing.

For more information on products that will bring back the bounce to your clients' dogs and fit well into your clinical practice:

www.velvet.org.nz

velvet@deernz.org.nz

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1 Ibid.

2 Wang B-X. Advances in the research of the chemistry, pharmacology and clinical application of pilose antler. Proceedings of the International Symposium on Deer Products, Changchun, People's Republic of China: 14-32, 1996.

Zhang ZQ, Wang Y, Zhang H, Zhang W, Zhang Y and Wang B-X. Anti-inflammatory effects of pilose antler pedicle peptide. Acta Pharmacologica Sinica. 15 (5): 282-284, 1994.

3 Pfizer Animal Health proprietary research, 2000.

4 UK DNA Archive for Companion Animals, Issue 3 February 2006

5 Pfizer Animal Health proprietary research, 1996: Sample size: 200.

6 Moreau M, Dupuis J, Bonneau NH, Lecuyer M. Clinical evaluation of a powder of quality elk velvet antler for the treatment of osteoarthritis in dogs. Canadian Veterinary Journal, 45, 133-139, February 2004.
