Pride Veterinary Centre has a dedicated Radioiodine ward within its hospital facilities and is one of only seven centres in the country to offer Radioiodine treatment. Cats are treated in a safe, isolated environment by a team of specially trained vets and nurses.

Initial Assessment

Before treatment, we ask to see all cats for an assessment appointment. They should have been stabilised on medication or diet first. They are clinically examined, their blood pressure is measured and blood and urine is taken for testing (haematology, biochemistry, T4, FIV/FeLV and full urinalysis).

We normally also perform an echocardiogram. We need to be sure that the treatment will not make them ill and that there are no other concurrent diseases which could make them ill during their stay. This is also a useful opportunity to see how the cat reacts to being in a ward.

If there is a suspicion of cardiac disease, we may advise thoracic radiography and an ECG.

Ordering Radioactive Iodine

If the results are satisfactory then a treatment appointment will be booked. As there are limited places in the radioiodine ward, there is a waiting list. Once the radioactive iodine has been ordered, it cannot be cancelled after 14 days before the treatment date – owners cancelling after this date will have to pay for the drug.

Treatment

Thyroid medication should be stopped 7 days before admission. Cats are admitted on Monday for radioiodine injection on a Tuesday. They are usually sedated to allow safe injection. Following the injection, they are hospitalised in the purpose built Radioiodine Ward for 14 days. As the cat and its urine and faeces are now radioactive, the owners cannot visit during this time. No clinical intervention is possible during hospitalisation which is why pre-treatment screening for disease is so important.
**Discharge**

At discharge, the radioactivity in the cat’s thyroid gland will have decayed sufficiently that they are considered safe to be at home. However, there will still be some radioactivity in the thyroid and small amounts in their urine and faeces so there are guidelines that must be followed to reduce risk to people in contact. These should be followed fully for two weeks after discharge and are advisable for one week after this. The owners must sign to agree to these conditions prior to discharge.

**Monitoring and Outcome**

Cats are seen for a post-treatment assessment 1, 3 and 6 months after treatment. A clinical examination, blood (haematology, biochemistry and total T4), urine analysis (SG, sediment, UPCR) and blood pressure are carried out. These checks can be carried out at Pride Veterinary Centre or at your practice.

Most (94-97%) cats are cured after a single injection. In a number of cats, there is a delayed response to the treatment and the thyroid hormone levels do not fully resolve until a few months after treatment – we would recommend monitoring blood results in these cats. Rarely, a cat may be resistant to the treatment and require a second injection (if there is a benign tumour) or a much higher dose (if there is a carcinoma). Investigation and treatment options will be discussed at this stage. A second treatment would incur further cost.

Most complications of treatment should have been prevented by the careful pre-treatment screening carried out. The most common complication is hypothyroidism but thyroid hormone levels will often rise over a period of months following treatment so careful monitoring would be carried out first. In some cats, where low levels persist and signs of disease are seen then thyroid hormone supplementation may be considered.

**Costs (including VAT)**

The initial assessment appointment costs £190 + blood pressure and lab fees (£300). Not all lab tests need to be performed if some have already been done at your practice.

If there are concerns about heart disease, further investigations may be recommended, usually echocardiography (£400) and sometimes thoracic radiographs (£300) or an ECG (£170).

Treatment costs £1,520 and includes sedation, the radioactive iodine itself and 14 days of hospitalisation in the radioiodine ward.

A recheck appointment at Pride Veterinary Centre would cost £300 inclusive of any further laboratory tests required.

**Booking and Appointments**

Enquiries and appointment requests should be made through referral reception on 01332 548911 or referrals@prideveterinarycentre.co.uk.

Please send us all relevant history and laboratory results.