Outcomes following endoscopic treatment of acute oropharyngeal stick injuries in dogs: 46 cases (2010 to 2020)

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Objectives

To review long-term outcomes of dogs with acute oropharyngeal stick injuries managed with rigid endoscopy at a UK referral centre.

Methods

Retrospective analysis and follow-up with referring veterinary surgeons and owners of patients referred between 2010 and 2020. Data regarding signalment, clinical presentation, treatment and final outcomes were recorded.

Results

Sixty-six dogs with acute oropharyngeal stick injury were identified and 46 (70.0%) of these had endoscopy of the wound. The dogs were of various breeds, ages (median = 3 years; range 0.6 to 11 years) and weights (median = 20.4kg; range 7.7 to 38.4kg) and 58.7% of patients were male. The median time from injury to referral was 1 day (range 2 hours to 7 days). Patients were anaesthetised, and injury tracts were explored using a 0° and 30° forward-oblique, 2.7mm diameter, 18cm length rigid endoscope with a corresponding 14.5 French sheath using saline infusion via gravity. All foreign material that could be grasped was removed using forceps. Tracts were flushed with saline and re-inspected to confirm removal of all visible foreign material. Out of 40 dogs with long-term follow up, 38 (95.0%) had no major long-term complications. Two dogs developed cervical abscessation after endoscopy, one of which resolved after repeat endoscopy and the other resolved after open surgery.

Statement (conclusions)

Long-term follow-up of dogs with acute oropharyngeal stick injury managed with rigid endoscopy showed an excellent outcome in 95.0% of cases. Where open surgery is required, rigid endoscopy is a useful diagnostic and therapeutic tool.