

**BIOMEDICAL & VETERINARY SCIENCES
GRADUATE PROGRAM**



ANNOUNCES

The Doctor of Philosophy Seminar and Examination of

Dr. Alessandra Franchini

**“The Longitudinal Outcome of Canine Myxomatous
Mitral valve disease in dogs: The LOOK Mitral study”**

Friday, May 6th, 2022
8:00am
Vet Med Classroom 100

Bio



I graduated in veterinary medicine from the University of Parma in 2016. After my DVM degree, I have sought to broaden my knowledge in veterinary cardiology with two periods of voluntary externship focused on this topic. In 2018 I've started my Ph.D. in the comparative cardiovascular research lab under the supervision of Dr. Borgarelli. My main research interests are degenerative mitral valve disease and advanced echocardiographic imaging.

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Lay Language Abstract

Despite being the most common heart disease in dogs, data on a large group of dogs affected by myxomatous mitral valve disease (MMVD) are currently sparse in veterinary medicine.

The Longitudinal Outcome Of canine (K9) Mitral valve disease (LOOK-Mitral) was established in 2015 to collect data on a large population of dogs affected by MMVD. A total of 6,102 dogs were enrolled in thirteen referral centers over three years. First, the baseline characteristics of dogs enrolled in the registry were described. These data mainly confirmed previous findings. Moreover, they provided some new insight like the possible presence of contractile dysfunction in some small breed dogs and the correlation between the intensity of the heart murmur and the severity of the disease also in large breed dogs.

Second, we described the medical treatment that the dogs in the LOOK-mitral registry were taking at enrollment. These data showed that the “Effect of Pimobendan in Dogs with Preclinical Myxomatous Mitral Valve Disease and Cardiomegaly” (EPIC) trial, a clinical trial published during the enrollment period, and the heart ultrasound (echocardiography) data influence cardiologist prescription habits.

Lastly, we evaluated if any clinical or echocardiographic variable could predict the reoccurrence of clinical signs of heart failure within 180 days from the first manifestation of those clinical signs in dogs enrolled in the LOOK-Mitral registry. While this study failed to accurately identify predictors of reoccurrence, dogs with larger left ventricular chamber sizes are more likely to present reoccurrence of clinical signs suggesting that closer monitoring of these dogs might be recommended.

Publications

The longitudinal outcome of canine (K9) myxomatous mitral valve disease (LOOK-Mitral) registry: Baseline treatment characteristics.

A Franchini, M Borgarelli, JA Abbott, G Menciotti, S Crosara, J Häggström, S Lahmers, S Rosenthal, W Tyrrell. J Vet Cardiol. 2022;41:99-120.

The Longitudinal Outcome Of Canine (K9) myxomatous mitral valve disease (LOOK-Mitral registry): Baseline characteristics. A Franchini, M Borgarelli, JA Abbott, G Menciotti, S Crosara, J Häggström, S Lahmers, S Rosenthal, W Tyrrell. J Vet Cardiol 2021;36:32-47

Predictors of reoccurrence of congestive signs within 180 days after successful treatment of the first episode of congestive heart failure in dogs with myxomatous mitral valve disease. A Franchini, JA Abbott, W Tyrrell, S Rosenthal, S Lahmers, G Menciotti, S Crosara, J Häggström , M Borgarelli. J Vet Cardiol. 2021;34:112-119

Clinical characteristics of cats referred for evaluation of subclinical cardiac murmurs. A Franchini, J Abbott, S Lahmers, A Eriksson. J Feline Med Surg. 2021;23:708-714.

Presentations

2021 – 31st ECVIM-CA Congress - European Society of Veterinary Cardiology - The longitudinal outcome of canine (K9) myxomatous mitral valve disease (LOOK-Mitral) registry: Baseline treatment characteristics

2020 – 30th ECVIM-CA Congress - European Society of Veterinary Cardiology - The Longitudinal Outcome Of Canine (K9) myxomatous mitral valve disease (LOOK-Mitral registry): Baseline characteristics.

2019 – 30th Annual Research Symposium (2019) VA-MD College of Veterinary Medicine. Predictors of reoccurrence of congestive signs within 180 days after successful treatment of the first episode of congestive heart failure in dogs with myxomatous mitral valve disease

2019 – 29th ECVIM-CA Congress – European Society of Veterinary Cardiology. Predictors of reoccurrence of congestive signs within 180 days after successful treatment of the first episode of congestive heart failure in dogs with myxomatous mitral valve disease

Awards and Academic Achievements

2021 - Young Investigator Awards 2021 Journal of Veterinary Cardiology

2019 – ECVIM-CA Congress – European Society of Veterinary Cardiology – Second Prize in the Young Investigator Research Communication.

2019 – 30th Annual Research Symposium (2019) VA-MD College of Veterinary Medicine – Outstanding PhD Presentation

Examination Graduate Committee

Major Advisor/Chair:

Michele Borgarelli, DVM, PhD

Professor

Department of Small Animal Science, VA-MD College of Veterinary Medicine, Virginia Tech

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Associate Professor

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Serena Crosara, DVM, PhD

Professor

Department of Veterinary Sciences, University of Parma

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