



## Lymphoma

### Notes from Dr. Post:

Lymphoma is the most common cancer we treat. It is analogous to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in people. Similar to that disease, it is a systemic cancer, meaning we cannot just "go in" and remove the tumor. This is a disease of the lymphatic system - there are lymphatic vessels in every organ and there are lymph nodes on the inside as well as on the outside of the body.

Being it is a systemic disease, the treatment needed is systemic - chemotherapy. When you hear this term, you think of what happens to people who get chemotherapy. But animals handle chemotherapy much better than people - this is because we use a lower dose of chemotherapy and because dogs and cats seem to tolerate the drugs better than people. Most of the pets that we treat, 70-80%, have either no or minimal side effects.

Chemotherapy is administered intravenously weekly for 6-8 weeks then every other or every 3<sup>rd</sup> week, usually for a year in dogs and two years in cats. We use various drugs in a cyclic protocol. Our trained oncology technicians administer the chemotherapy. We try to perform all chemotherapy as outpatient procedures with most administrations taking 5-30 minutes. The side effects of chemotherapy, which are usually mild, can include: vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite and loss of energy level. If these side effects do occur and they are mild, there is no need to worry. If the side effects are more than mild or if you are unsure if they are mild or not, we would always rather you call.

Our doctors will try to answer all questions you have regarding your pet's cancer and the recommended therapy.