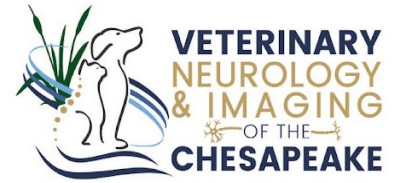


NEUROLOGY

Caudal Cervical Spondylomyelopathy

by Anthony Conte, DVM



Caudal cervical spondylomyelopathy (CSM), or Wobblers Syndrome, is a disease of the cervical spine (base of the neck) that is

commonly seen in large and giant-breed dogs, where Doberman Pinchers and Great Danes are overrepresented.

Other common names for CSM include: Cervical Vertebral instability, Cervical Malformation/Matriculation Syndrome, Disc

Associated Wobbler's Syndrome.

CSM is characterized by osseous (or bony) compression of the spinal cord and/or nerve roots, which leads to neurological signs

and/or neck pain. The term wobbler syndrome is used to describe the characteristic wobbly gait (walk) that affected dogs have.

There have been many suspect causes of CSM such as nutritional causes and body conformation causes both which have been

discredited. As of late rapid growth was suggested as the cause however never confirmed.

There are two types or forms of CSM, a Dynamic form and a Static form. Dynamic Wobblers: Dynamic spinal cord compression

(compression that changes with different positions of the cervical spine) always occurs with any type of compression. In this form

the lesion is one that worsens or improves with different positions. Static Wobblers: Vertebral malformation (bony associated

compression) is most commonly seen in giant breed dogs, usually in young adult dogs that are less than three years of age. The bony

malformation can compress the spinal cord from the top and bottom, from the top and sides, or just from the sides.

Diagnosis requires advanced imaging with the safest and most reliable diagnosis achieved by MRI and potentially dynamic MRI.

While CT can be used the advantage of MRI is that it allows direct visualization of the spinal cord and signal changes to the cord

itself.

Treatment varies from medical support, exercise restriction, pain medications, anti-inflammatories all the way to surgery. Different

cases will have different recommendations for treatment.

In regard to long term management of wobblers syndrome, if elected to treat without surgery this will require long term medical

management going forward. With surgical