ACTH STIMULATION TEST (CANINE)

Indications

This test is commonly used as a screening test because of its speed and relatively low cost.

- Diagnostic test for the differentiation of normal dogs from those with hypo- or hyperadrenocorticism.
- Test of choice for the assessment of:
  - adrenocortical reserve in dogs on treatment for hyperadrenocorticism
  - diagnosis of iatrogenic hypercortisolism in dogs which have a history of steroid therapy

Notes

- ACTH is not licensed for use in the dog.
- The ACTH stimulation test has a lower sensitivity but higher specificity than the LDDS for the diagnosis of canine hyperadrenocorticism
- Results of ACTH stimulation can be affected by prior glucocorticoid administration, stress, and chronic disease. Final interpretation of the results must be made in the context of the history and clinical findings. ACTH stimulation tests in common with other endocrine tests, can be associated with occasional false positive and negative results.
- If glucocorticoids had been administrated, ACTH testing should be delayed for at least 2-4 weeks after the withdrawal of therapy to allow normalisation of the pituitary-adrenal axis.
- Injectable drugs including betamethasone, dexamethasone, depomedrone, delmadinone (Tardak) and proligestone may all affect ACTH test results for variable periods of time. Please contact the laboratory for further advice on testing these cases.
- As the results of iatrogenic hypercortisolism and spontaneous hypoadrenocorticism can be similar on ACTH testing, a history of prior drug therapy is helpful in interpreting the test.

Protocol

- Collect 1-2 ml blood in plain/gel tube.
- Administer 1mg (1ml) Synacthen Depot® intramuscularly for dogs >15kg or 0.5mg (0.5ml) Synacthen Depot® intramuscularly for dogs <15kg. Avoid injection into fat.
- Discard any remaining Synacthen Depot® or use immediately in another dog weighing less than 15kg.
- Collect 1-2 ml blood sample at 60 minutes post injection.
- Label tubes with name and time of sample.
- Submit tubes with separated serum and request form to the laboratory.

We are unfortunately unable to supply Synacthen Depot® - please contact your drug wholesalers.