



## **I-INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF ANIMAL SCIENCE IN SEMI-ARID REGIONS**

*Universidade Federal do Agreste de Pernambuco – UFAPE*

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Field of work: Pets

### **Reproductive Diseases in Cats and Bitches: Perception of the Guardians of the UFAPE Veterinary Hospital on the Impacts of Contraceptives.**

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Reproductive system disorders are common in many different species, regardless of gender. In female dogs and cats, these diseases can present varying degrees of morbidity and mortality, with different consequences, ranging from the absence of clinical signs to infertility, which can culminate in death. They are influenced by various factors, especially the administration of certain sex steroids. Considering the high population density of stray animals in Brazil, and the practice of breeding semi-domiciled animals, elective neutering is an important measure, but it comes at a significant cost in relation to the low purchasing power of those responsible. Faced with this reality, owners choose to suppress oestrus, with the consequent impossibility of pregnancy, through the use of synthetic progesterone analogues (progestins), including megestrol, medroxyprogesterone and proligestone. Indiscriminate use can predispose to serious reproductive disorders such as pyometra, cystic endometrial hyperplasia, mammary gland hyperplasia, mammary and ovarian neoplasms, as well as fetal death if used during pregnancy. It's important to note that progestogens should be applied to females in the anestrus phase, requiring a veterinarian to evaluate the estrous cycle. In Brazil, these drugs can be obtained without a veterinary prescription, due to the lack of regulations. They can easily be found in farm shops and are indicated as an easy-to-use alternative for preventing pregnancies in dogs and cats. Most of these drugs are applied by owners during the proestrus and oestrus phases, or even in pregnant females, leading to a worsening of adverse effects. Understanding the perception of guardians about reproductive diseases and the use of progestogens is essential directing effective strategies for prevention and treatment of illnesses. The aim of this study was to analyze the level of education of pet owners and raise awareness about the inappropriate use of progestogens and the harmful effects on animal health. The research was carried out at the University Veterinary Hospital of Universidade Federal do Agreste de Pernambuco (UFAPE), and 79 questionnaires were applied. The results showed that the majority of owners are aware of the possibility of developing reproductive diseases, with 81.01% (64/79). Of these, 24.06% (19/79) said they had used injectable contraceptives on their animals. Similarly to what is described in the literature, the main reason for this choice is related to purchasing power, mentioned by 22.8% of the interviewees, followed by lack of knowledge of the risks, cited by 13.92%. On the other hand, the survey revealed that 69.63% of the guardians are aware of the consequences of the unguided use of progestogens, and that these include abortion, defective fetuses, mammary tumors, pyometra and complications during childbirth. These results underscore the importance of raising awareness among owners, highlighting the need for adequate guidance and access to accurate information on animal reproductive health.

**Keywords: progestogens, outreach programs, reproductive health**

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