

RVC creates a dog epilepsy smart phone app to help manage mans' best friend's fits

Published: 18 May 2015 | Last Updated: 02 Jun 2015 17:12:20

PRESS RELEASE

The Royal Veterinary College, University of London (RVC) has developed the first ever app that allows dog owners to monitor and improve the lives of pets that suffer from epilepsy.



RVC Pet Epilepsy Tracker

Epilepsy is the most common long-term neurological disorder seen in dogs affecting around 50,000 canines in the UK. Now, the 'RVC Pet Epilepsy Tracker', lets dog lovers map seizure activity and medication requirements on their mobile phone and tablet devices for the first time.

The app has been developed in collaboration with the human epilepsy charity [Epilepsy Society](#), who created a successful app to manage the condition in humans. It is launching during National Epilepsy Week (May 17 – 23) and is available to download on [Google Play](#) now for Android devices and [Apple iTunes App Store](#) for Apple devices.

As well as having a massive effect on the animals' lives, canine epilepsy can be an emotional burden for owners. A huge commitment is required for looking after sick pets, including medicating the dogs several times per day, constantly monitoring for drug side effects, and ongoing financial costs.

To help increase owners' understanding of the condition the app contains up-to-date veterinary knowledge on managing epilepsy. This includes everything from what the condition is, how it is diagnosed and identifying different seizure types, to practical advice on what to do when a

seizure strikes. It also includes functions such as reminders for each medication prescribed because many dogs require more than one drug to treat their seizures.

The app will also benefit veterinary surgeons as owners can convert their dog's up-to-date medical history, seizure diary and medication diary into a pdf file and send it directly to their vet. There is also the option of recording detailed information of an epileptic episode including what happened during and after the seizure, how long it lasted and how severe the owner rated it to be. This will aid vets in better understanding their patient's condition and whether treatment is effective. The app is also set to revolutionise the understanding of how epilepsy progresses in individual dogs, and patterns of seizure activity, as owners can share their seizure and medication diaries directly with researchers at the RVC, to be stored on a large anonymous database. This will allow long term studies of seizure activity that researchers have previously been unable to obtain data for, for a large number of dogs.

The app's contents were designed by the RVC Canine Epilepsy Research team members, Prof Holger Volk and Dr Rowena Packer. Prof Holger Volk, Clinical Director of the RVC's [small animal referral clinic](#) and specialist in Neurology and Neurosurgery said: "I am totally thrilled by us being able to support all the owners of pets with epilepsy out there with this app. Being able to objectively monitor your pets' seizures and having medication reminders will give some control back to owners and improve their quality of life and most importantly the one of their pet."

Co-designer of the app and Clinical Investigations Postdoctoral Researcher at RVC, Dr Rowena Packer, added: "We hope this app will be a great help to owners, but also to all the vets managing this challenging condition in their practices, who will be able to receive full records of their patients' seizures, medication and history at the click of a button."

"By offering owners the opportunity to share their records directly with us at RVC, we hope they will feel a part of better understanding canine epilepsy by contributing to future research in this simple way"

Amanda Cleaver, Epilepsy Society's communications manager, said: "We were thrilled when the RVC approached us about developing our smartphone app into a version to help owners of dogs with epilepsy. Our app has been incredibly helpful for people with epilepsy, we're sure it will be as successful for owners of dogs with epilepsy."

Notes to Editors

Interviews are available on request.

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Epilepsy Society is the UK's leading provider of epilepsy services. Through cutting edge research, awareness campaigns, information resources and expert care, Epilepsy Society works

for everyone affected by epilepsy in the UK. Their smartphone app, Epilepsy Tool Kit, allows people with epilepsy and their carers to manage their epilepsy, and provides information for the general public to know how to help someone who is having a seizure. The app was partly funded by an unrestricted educational grant from Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, and supported by Blu's Tale Foundation, a support group ran by owners of dogs with epilepsy. Donations towards canine epilepsy research at the RVC can be made simply texting EPIL15 £amount to 70070, or through the RVC's Animal Care Trust website, where there is a specific canine epilepsy fund. To keep up to date with ongoing research in this area, visit the teams dedicated Facebook page.