

CHOLESTEROL, TRIGLYCERIDES, AND AGING IN SLED DOGS

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The dog has been an important medical research model because they share the same environment as humans and develop many of the same chronic diseases. Clinical trials demonstrate that lowering serum cholesterol and triglyceride levels in humans will reduce the incidence of coronary heart disease. Dyslipidemia has several negative health consequences, resulting from impaired immune function and compromised membrane integrity. Plasma cholesterol and triglyceride levels can be affected by age, body condition, diet and lifestyle. Sled dogs are born athletes that continue to perform after their prime. Homogeneity of a kennel, including diet, environment and all husbandry parameters make these animals ideal models for determining the effects of age on cholesterol and triglyceride levels. We examined plasma samples from sled dogs of three distinct age ranges. The results of this study will be discussed.