

FDA Approves Drug to Treat Cancer in Dogs

Prescription drug is approved to treat canine cutaneous mast cell tumors.

Posted: June 4, 2009, 5 a.m. EDT

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved Pfizer Animal Health's Palladia (toceranib phosphate), the first drug developed specifically for the treatment of cancer in dogs. All cancer drugs now used in veterinary medicine originally were developed for use in humans and are not approved for use in animals.

The prescription drug is approved to treat canine cutaneous mast cell tumors, a type of cancer responsible for about 1 out of 5 cases of canine skin tumors, according to the FDA.

The New York-based company said it plans to introduce the product to boarded specialists within the coming weeks and months to expand the body of clinical experience with this new therapy. The drug will be available for purchase in early 2010.

Palladia is an oral therapy indicated to treat Patnaik grade II or III recurrent cutaneous mast cell tumors with or without regional lymph node involvement. The drug belongs to the tyrosine kinase inhibitor class of compounds and works by blocking the activity of key receptors important for the development of blood vessels that supply tumors, as well as receptors critical for tumor survival, according to Pfizer Animal Health.

The most common side effects associated with Palladia are diarrhea, decrease or loss of appetite, lameness, weight loss and blood in stool.