

Dog Food Recall Spiked Kidney-Related Claims

Veterinary Pet Insurance says dog food recall prompted surge in vet visits.

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There was a significant rise in the diagnosis of kidney conditions in March 2007 — the same month that Canada-based Menu Foods recalled about 60 million cans and bags of tainted food — according to Veterinary Pet Insurance.

The company found that animal health testing increased by 37 percent in March and initial diagnosis of kidney conditions increased 33 percent for dogs and 46 percent for cats compared to expected seasonal averages.

“Our data shows that the pet food recall motivated a considerable number of our policyholders to take their pets to the veterinarian,” said Carol McConnell, DVM, vice president and chief veterinary medical officer for VPI. “A few serious kidney conditions, whether caused by tainted food or other unrelated factors, were discovered as a result.”

Claims submitted for treatment of uremia showed the largest spike, increasing 141 percent for dogs and 152 percent for cats in March.

Kidney disease was the third most common feline claim filed by VPI policyholders in 2006 and was among the Top 40 most common claims filed for dogs.