

Analgesia in Avian Medicine - A Review

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Introduction

Research into the pharmacokinetics and efficacy of analgesics in many bird species is limited and often contradictory. The lack of information regarding proven effective drugs and dose rates creates a situation where avian practitioners are forced to extrapolate doses from studies on unrelated species and probably rely on one or two types of analgesics, assuming (or hoping) that they work. I find myself in this situation, particularly when dealing with threatened native species where no research has been carried out in this area. Because of this, and the difficulty in assessing subtle pain behaviour, I suspect that in a clinical setting pain in birds is generally not well recognised and commonly inadequately treated.

The purpose of this presentation is to briefly review the physiology and recognition of pain in common bird species and to offer an evidence-based approach to providing analgesia.

Avian Nociception Physiology

Assessing Pain

Options for Analgesia

Summary

