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PILOT STUDY ON THE EFFICACY AND SAFETY OF GROWTH FACTOR-RICH PLASMA (PRGF-ENDORET®) EYE-DROPS FOR THE TREATMENT OF SPONTANEOUS CHRONIC CORNEAL EPITHELIAL DEFECT IN THE DOG

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Purpose: To examine the efficacy and safety of growth factor-rich plasma (PRGF-Endoret®) eye-drops, administered three-times a day, as adjunctive therapy for spontaneous chronic corneal epithelial defects (SCCED) in dogs. **Methods:** Fifty-three client-owned dogs, diagnosed with unilateral SCCED, were included in the study. Animals were randomly assigned to one of three adjunctive treatment modalities: dry cotton swab debridement alone, or with topical PRGF-Endoret® (18 and 7 dogs, respectively); and diamond burr debridement alone, or combined with topical PRGF-Endoret® (16 and 12 dogs, respectively). Basal treatment for superficial corneal ulcer (topical antibiotics, cycloplegics and artificial tears) was administered to all patients. Breed, age, gender, SCCED size, epithelial healing time (EHT), signs of ocular irritation or discomfort after PRGF-Endoret® application, and complications were recorded. The two groups without PRGF-Endoret® eye-drops were used as controls. **Results:** No statistical differences were observed in terms of brachycephalic/non-brachycephalic breed distribution, gender, age or affected eye among groups ($p>0.05$). No signs of ocular irritation or discomfort were observed after topical application of PRGF-Endoret®. Similarly, there were no statistically significant differences in terms of EHT among treatment groups ($p>0.05$). Two dogs, one of them under PRGF-Endoret® topical medication, developed melting corneal ulcers that required rescue treatment. **Conclusions:** The use of three-times a day PRGF-Endoret® eye-drops as adjunctive therapy, was not beneficial in the management of SCCED in dogs; however, its topical application was well tolerated. The present pilot study can be used as a guide in the design and implementation of larger scale efficacy studies.