



“Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy and Cancer in Animals”

The effects of hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) on tumors have been studied since the early utilization of HBOT to treat clinical disease.

Although early opinions on this topic were centered around the potential of HBOT being “cancer-causing” or having a “cancer-promoting” effect, the majority of more recent research suggests no evidence for tumor production or increased tumor growth.

In fact recent studies have shown a synergistic effect with the concurrent use of HBOT and radiation and with some chemotherapeutic agents in the reduction of tumor size.

While many more basic and clinical studies would need to be completed on the molecular and cellular effects of oxygen (and hyperbaric oxygen) on tumor cells and the tumor environment, to reach a definitive conclusion, the current reported evidence from treated cases is positive for the use of HBOT.

Each individual case should be evaluated by the attending veterinarian and wherever possible, evidenced based data should be used to make informed decisions on treatment modalities and protocols. When considering the application of HBOT we must consider not only the effects that high tissue oxygen concentrations have but also the effects of pressure on the body systems.

With the current research and evidence available: It is the position of the Veterinary Hyperbaric Association (VHA) that neoplasia is not an absolute contraindication for the use of HBOT when utilizing clinically acceptable treatment protocols.