

TOOLS TRADE of the

A gem of a ventilator, a lightweight ultrasound and more are discussed and debated this month ...

Ohmeda 7000 Ventilator

by Dr Michel Doney, Margaret River Vet Hospital, WA

We don't use our ventilator that frequently but when we do, it's a real gem. It's so nice to be able to free up a set of hands that would be otherwise ventilating the patient.

What's good about it

This ventilator is particularly useful when treating our snakebite paralysis patients. We also deal with the odd case of 1080 poisoning. For a really severe poisoning, the animal needs to be anaesthetised for a long period of time and the ventilator really helps.

It's almost an essential item in small clinics that are doing their own after-hours work and rural clinics where there is often only one person on duty through the night.

The ventilator is kept permanently in our surgery suite so it's easy to access when faced with a patient that isn't breathing properly. All of our nurses have been trained so they are confident in placing a patient on the ventilator. With that taken care of, they can then get on with the rest of their monitoring.

Due to the fact that the ventilator isn't used frequently, it's important to have staff trained to a level where they feel confident in using it when it's really needed.

What's not so good

The big negative of the unit we own is that it's actually designed for humans. It works fine for larger patients but for those under 10 kilograms, it's impossible to use. We still manually ventilate our smaller patients.

Where did you get it

This unit came with the practice when we purchased it but most of the larger veterinary supply companies such as Vetquip (vetquip.com.au) carry ventilators. ➤



IDEXX Coag Dx Analyser

by Dr Tess Butler, Moe Veterinary Centre, VIC

The Coag Dx Analyser measures the clotting pathways PT (prothrombin time) and APTT (activated partial thromboplastin time). We use it when we have a patient who is bleeding and we're concerned that they have issues with coagulation.

What's good about it

This unit measures two coagulation pathways that are involved in blood clotting. If one of these pathways registers as 'prolonged' on the screen then this points us in the direction as to why the patient is bleeding.

One of the main reasons we use it is when we suspect that a dog has eaten rat bait. In these cases, the clotting vitamin to be consumed is vitamin K and this will elongate one of the clotting pathways (PT). If we have a very suspicious history and a prolonged PT on this machine then that's basically a diagnosis. We can then give the appropriate treatment and hopefully save the patient's life.

Usually, we are hoping to eliminate rat baits and problems with coagulation, but there have been a few cases in the past few months that the analyser has allowed us to diagnose quickly and helped to save the patient.

There was a bit of a debate when we bought it as to whether we would get value for our money. At this rate, I think we probably will, particularly with after-hours cases. When a dog comes in at 6.30 on a Friday night, you need to know if it's rodenticide toxicity so that you treat it promptly, and can feel more comfortable leaving the patient overnight after it's stabilised. It's really handy to have that information if you don't have the option to refer to a 24-hour emergency centre.

What's not so good

The only issue with the Analyser is that the cartridges have to be at room temperature before inserting them into the machine. It can take 20 minutes for them to warm up which isn't great when you have a bleeding patient and want to know if you need to give them therapy immediately or not.

Where did you get it

IDEXX Laboratories (idexx.com.au). ➤



TOOLS TRADE



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Tonovet

by Dr Sally Smith, Doyalson Animal Hospital, Doyalson, NSW

I've recently purchased the Tonovet for measuring eye pressure in cats and dogs. Previously, I was using an old Schiotz tonometer that was extremely fiddly. You needed to have the animal facing up towards the ceiling while a metal plunger rested against the eye. It required the use of local anaesthetic and the results were not very accurate.

What's good about it

The Tonovet is much easier to use. It doesn't require any local anaesthetic, it's very quick and the animals handle it well. It has a small plunger that fires repeatedly against the eye but it's such light pressure and so fast, the animal doesn't feel a thing. The biggest advantage is that you simply need to hold the animal's head still while taking the measurement.

It takes six readings and averages out the result. If there's a lot of standard deviation between the readings, it informs you that it's an inaccurate average. However, the majority of cases receive an accurate average.

There is a small screen attached to the Tonovet that displays the results. You can take readings from both eyes, compare the results and the whole process only takes a few moments.

I use it to check the eye pressure of every dog and cat that has a red eye. I can then immediately treat the animal for any problems that are detected.

What's not so good

It's important that the Tonovet is placed in exactly the right position—it can't be too close to the eye or too far away. There's a little bit of skill getting the instrument positioned in the sweet spot.

Where did you get it

Sound Veterinary Equipment (soundveterinary.com.au). ➤

Ibex Pro

by Dr Iain Trueman, Esk Veterinary Services, QLD

The Ibex Pro was a real game changer for me. My previous equine reproductive ultrasound equipment was bulky and weighed about 15 kilograms. I was lugging it in and out of the car, then running it off an extension cord. The Ibex Pro has made my life much easier.

What's good about it

This unit is easily portable, shock proof, battery powered, weighs about three kilograms, and is completely impact- and dust-resistant.

The probes attach to the unit with a two-metre-long cable. For reproductive work, I use a 5MHZ linear rectal transducer that you cup in your hand and then pop inside the mare to get an image of her uterus and ovaries. With this unit, we can reliably diagnose pregnancy in mares as early as 15 days, look for twins, check for fluid, and image the cervix quite easily. It has image storage capability, will store short videos and sync with your laptop or desktop computer. The battery will run continuously for about six hours and charges very quickly on a desktop or in-car charger.

I also purchased the tendon probe. It's a much smaller 10MHZ linear probe with a freeze button to look at really fine detail. It's light enough so you can just clip the horse's leg up in the stable, use a bit of sedation, and do your tendon scanning without having to wheel around a massive great ultrasound on a trolley.

The probes and the cabling are Kevlar reinforced which makes them very hardy. I'm onto my fourth season with the machine and, without a doubt, it's the best piece of equipment I've purchased since I've been in veterinary practice.

What's not so good

There are certainly ultrasounds available that will give you a superior image. However, for the work I'm doing, I'm happy with the image in order to have such a portable, shock-proof, waterproof little machine.

Where did you get it

Radincon (radincon.com.au). ➤

