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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wisconsin's Veterinary School Among First to Offer New Form of Electrosurgical Cautery

MADISON – Surgeons at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine now have new technology that permits them to seal blood vessels more effectively and safely during surgery.

“We recently acquired a new, state-of-the-art electrosurgical cautery device that enables more rapid and effective control of blood vessels compared to traditional electrocautery units,” says Dr. Robb Hardie, a surgeon at the school's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital.

The device (a Force Triad-LigaSure™) cauterizes or seals blood vessels by fusing the collagen within the vessel wall using a high-current, low-voltage form of electrical energy. What is unique about the device is that it senses in real-time the heat build-up within the tissues and automatically adjusts the level of energy so that tissues being sealed don't become brittle or devitalized from excess thermal energy. As a result, blood vessels sealed by this method remain more flexible, and can withstand greater pressure with less risk of postoperative bleeding.

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“This device can effectively seal vessels up to 7 millimeters in diameter,” Dr. Hardie says. “This enables us to perform more complicated minimally invasive laparoscopic surgeries, whereas before we might have hesitated to perform a procedure laparoscopically because of the potential difficulty of managing larger blood vessels if they opened up.”

He notes that the use of electrocautery also has the advantage that vascular clips or staples are not left behind in the body.

“It speeds things up,” he says. “Instead of having to use multiple instruments to dissect, clip and transect a vascular pedicle, we can now do it in one maneuver.”

It is especially helpful for procedures such as laparoscopic spays, subtotal pericardectomies (heart surgery), splenectomies, and the removal of various types of tumors.

The University of Wisconsin is one of only a handful of veterinary medical schools that have this equipment.

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Photo caption (high-resolution jpeg image available by emailing request to banakt@svm.vetmed.wisc.edu):

A&p/surgery/Electrosurgical cautery 7.jpg

The School of Veterinary Medicine’s new electrosurgical cautery device functions as both a tissue/blood vessel clamp and sealing instrument, allowing surgeons to work more quickly and safely, especially during minimally invasive laparoscopic surgeries. Here, Dr. Robb Hardie uses the device to perform a laparoscopic surgery.