



Name: Poppy

Diagnosis : Tail Pull Injury



Presentation

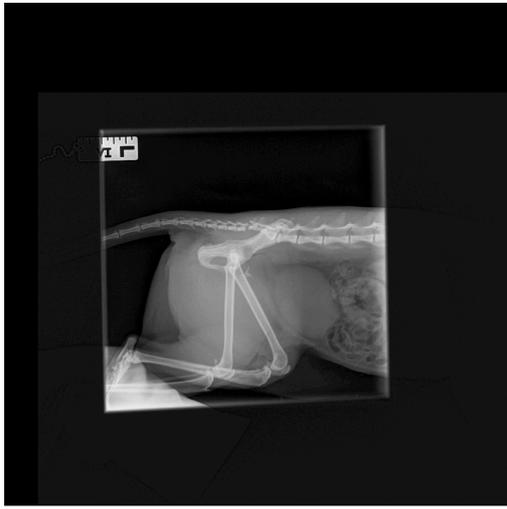
Poppy was brought into the practice unable to walk. On examination the vet found she had little to no sensation in her hind legs. Her tail was floppy and she was unable to move it. Poppy was clearly uncomfortable and distressed and it was noted her bladder was very full. She was admitted into hospitalisation for further investigation and treatment.

Action

Blood was drawn from Poppy and tests were run in the in-house laboratory to evaluate her internal organ function. From the results the vet could see her kidneys were beginning to be put under pressure. This was likely to be caused by the large volume in her bladder causing a backup of urine in the kidneys. Poppy was given an injectable pain killer and her bladder was manually expressed to keep her comfortable.

Diagnosis

Poppy had radiographs taken of her spine and pelvis. It was found she had a 'tail-pull injury' - an evulsion of her first coccygeal vertebrae from her sacrum. This can be caused by trapping the tail in a door or a fence.



Due to Poppy's inability to empty her bladder or defecate it was clear her nerves had been affected and it was unknown how long, if ever, she would take to regain function of her legs and the ability to eliminate unaided. Her owner was given a guarded prognosis and asked to decide if she wanted to continue treating Poppy.

Treatment

Poppy received intensive nursing care during her stay. She was receiving pain relief every 4-6 hours and having her bladder emptied 3 times daily – if her bladder were allowed to become over full it could cause her kidneys to fail.- She needed encouraging to eat and drink and due to her lack of viable leg function we had to be sure to turn her every 2 hours to prevent bed sores and to perform physiotherapy on her hind legs ensuring the blood supply to the leg muscles was adequate.

After three days of hospitalisation Poppy was able to stand and walk a few steps but she was still unable to eliminate. It was explained to her owner that she could take some time to re-gain this function and she may never be fully continent. Her owner was willing to try for her and took her home to perform the nursing care she needed at home.

Poppy's owner coped really well with her need for around the clock care. She had to learn to read Poppy's signals for when she needed her bladder emptying and do this herself. After the first week of care poppy became difficult and was not letting her owner empty her bladder or care for her in the way she needed. The vet advised to let Poppy try for herself.

Initially Poppy could only get into her litter tray and produce some spots of urine but in a short time she was urinating and defecating as normal. She regained full movement in her legs and is now able to climb and run and hunt outdoors as she used to. She still has no movement of feeling in her tail and may have to undergo surgery at some point but it does not hold her back at all.