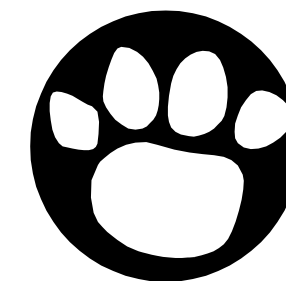
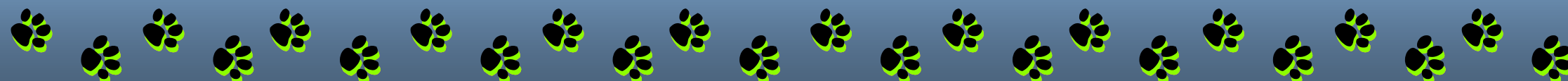


November



Keeper is a fifteen year old, male neutered Patterdale Terrier. He has been coming to the Alfreton Park Veterinary Hospital since he was a puppy. Over the years keeper has been treated for a various conditions including arthritis and skin problems caused by hypothyroidism. Just a year ago Keeper was also extremely ill with vomiting and diarrhoea. The cause of his illness is still unknown but Keeper made a good recovery.



More recently Matt has been treating Keeper for a mass on his face. The mass had become ulcerated and was getting infected despite treatment with antibiotics.

Following Matt's advice, Keeper was booked in for a general anaesthetic and Matthew surgically removed the mass. Despite being fifteen years old, Keeper had a smooth anaesthetic and recovery. The surgical wound has healed very nicely and the sutures have now been removed.

The story in pictures...



Keeper is anaesthetised. The area is clipped and cleaned in preparation for surgery and Matt operates to remove the mass.

Keeper's case shows that anaesthesia in older patients is safe and worth while to improve quality of life.

Anaesthesia in Older Patients

Modern anaesthetics are generally very safe, although every anaesthetic carries an element of risk. Anaesthetics are usually required in older patients for surgical removal of tumours and dental work. Although the anaesthetic risk may be increased in older patients surgery is often essential and there are many things the vet can do to minimise these risks.

- Blood tests – to look at organ function.
- Intra-Venous Fluid Therapy – to correct any dehydration and support the organs during anaesthesia and surgery.
- Adjust pre-medication and anaesthetic doses to better suit the patient.

What is Hypothyroidism?

- An under active thyroid gland produces low levels of the thyroid hormone. Thyroid controls metabolism so hypothyroid dogs have a slow metabolic rate.
- Symptoms develop over a period of time and include:
 - Skin and coat changes – Skin infections, a dry, brittle coat, hair loss & scurfy skin.
 - Lethargy and weight gain and exercise intolerance.
- Once diagnosed hypothyroidism can be easily treated with daily tablets that replace the thyroid levels in the system.
- Regular blood tests are very important to monitor thyroid hormone levels and ensure the patient is receiving the correct dose of medication.
- Once diagnosed the long term prognosis is very good.

