

# Dodger's Digest

Official Newsletter of Dodgerslist

Web site and care forum offering education and support for owners and dogs with disc disease

[www.dodgerslist.com](http://www.dodgerslist.com)



## Bright Outcomes: Jinx

By Bonnie Capwell



Jinx is a mini long-haired, 11-year-old dachshund (although he's really more of a tweenie!) He is our little character; typical dachshund, bold and fearless. And with the added joy of loving to be dressed up in sweaters and the like for our cold winters here in Wisconsin.

Last February, we learned that Jinx had IVDD by virtue of finding him on his right side, completely paralyzed on his left side. Turns out the paralysis was due to a herniated

intervertebral disc causing spinal cord compression at C3-4. We opted for the surgical option – a ventral slot decompression surgery was performed on him on February 26<sup>th</sup>, with the abnormal disc material at C3-4 removed, as well as having the abnormal centers of the two adjacent disc spaces removed as well. It really was pretty serious surgery for our little guy, and it all happened so fast. From the time I discovered him on the floor on his side to taking him home from the surgeon was about 72 hours.

At home care for the first few weeks after was daunting. Jinx didn't immediately return to walking and required round-the-clock care at home for the first couple of weeks. While our surgeon worked wonders with treating the issue, he left us less than prepared to deal with what followed post-surgery. All he said was that Jinx required 24-hour care without elaborating as to what that meant. Already exhausted from the whirlwind of testing and CT scans and surgery, now we were tasked with caring for and rehabbing our still paralyzed little guy. I was scared and worried and overwhelmed.

One night, when I couldn't sleep because I was listening for any sound from Jinx, I found Dodgerslist.com. I can't begin to describe my relief at finding so many resources on the condition, how to deal with things post-surgery, etc. The comfort that came from knowing others had dealt with this was immediate. I had been feeling alone on an island while trying to help my dog recover from a traumatic life event. I was so grateful to find the resources and the community.

It took a few weeks for all of the inflammation to go away and for his nerves to fire up again, but once they did, Jinx's recovery from this event was nothing short of amazing. To be free of the pain from the problem disc was a huge relief, and he is actually in better condition now post surgery than he was before the disc herniated. Even better, we have our happy, silly boy back. We still monitor his activity levels and insist on no jumping up and down. To this day we have no regrets about our decision to save our boy.

I will confess that had we known there were less traumatic options for his condition that we might have opted for them. But the problem was that even our primary vet had no idea he had this and really didn't know where to refer us beyond a surgeon

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### Inside this issue

- Bright Outcomes..... [1](#)
- DL Gets Around..... [4](#)
- Panting..... [7](#)
- Poetry Corner..... [6](#)
- Rabies Booster..... [4](#)
- Say Cheese..... [8](#)
- Share the Love..... [10](#)
- Travel Crates..... [2](#)
- Vestibular Disease..... [9](#)
- White Blood Cells..... [5](#)

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# Jinx

for treatment of the condition. There is such a need for the information Dodgerslist provides to be shared far and wide.

Thanks Linda! Dodgerslist saved my sanity, and helped us to know how to better help our Jinx in his recovery. If you ever had doubts as to why you started this, please know that its value to this family, and its beloved dachshund, Jinx, goes way beyond words.



## Travel Safely: Crash test results for crates and carriers

Reprinted with permission of the Center for Pet Safety  
[www.centerforpetsafety.org](http://www.centerforpetsafety.org)

Subaru of America, Inc. and Center for Pet Safety (CPS), a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit research and consumer advocacy organization, announced the results of the 2015 Crate and Carrier Crashworthiness Studies - a collaborative initiative to examine the effectiveness and safety of pet crates and carriers in the event of a crash. After several eye-opening and informative tests - including instances of complete failure - three top products emerged; CPS has selected the Gunner Kennels GI Intermediate with 8 Tie Down Straps as the 2015 Top Performing Crate and both the PetEgo Forma Frame Jet Set Carrier with ISOFIX-Latch Connection and Sleepypod Mobile Pet Bed with PPRS Handilock as the 2015 Top Performing Carriers.

An unrestrained pet in the car can be a distraction and a serious safety concern for both pets and humans in the event of an accident.

The top performers surpassed all competing products in the CPS-designed studies, which included testing of crate connections and rigorous crash testing to examine crate and carrier structural integrity.

In the event of a crash, it is important for pet crates and carriers to contain the dog and prevent the animal from becoming a projectile. It is also important for the containment device to remain fully secured at the connection points. If a pet is unrestrained, or the structural integrity should fail, the dog can potentially strike and injure a human passenger.

Subaru recognizes the importance of keeping the entire family safe on the road, including beloved pets, said Michael McHale, Subaru's director of corporate communications. "Alongside Center for Pet Safety, we are proud to help lead the charge in identifying the best crates and carriers for pet lovers everywhere, while, more importantly, making pet parents aware of the safety measures they can take and the dangers that can occur if they don't. We recommend that owners choose the right sized crate for their dog, which is generally six inches longer than the body of the dog. We are also pleased that our crossover vehicles, which are award winners themselves for safety, accept most crate and carrier sizes."



The Gunner Kennel GI

The first official Olympic mascot was created in 1972 for the Munich Olympics.

Waldi the dachshund was created by the same German designer who created the Lufthansa airline logo.



Waldi appeared on plush toys, plastic toys, buttons, posters, stickers, and pins.

The marathon route for that Olympics was in the shape of a dog.


## Travel Safely

While many crate and carrier manufacturers claim their products are crash-tested and safe for use in a vehicle, there are currently no test protocols or performance standards in the U.S. to substantiate these claims. The data gathered from these studies will assist CPS in formulating these much needed crate and carrier testing and performance standards.

Far and away the most impressive crate tested was the Gunner Kennels G1 Intermediate with 8' Tie Down Straps, a sturdy travel device that was able to withstand the most significant forces generated in CPS testing with a combination of strong structural support and integrity. On the carrier side, the Pet Ego Forma Frame Jet Set Carrier used an innovative ISOFIX-Latch connection, to snap the carrier firmly into place and fully contain the test dog throughout the crash test. Lastly, 2013 CPS Harness Crashworthiness Study honoree, Sleepypod, was also recognized in the carrier category for the Sleepypod Mobile Pet Bed with PPRS Handilock, a product that snugly straps into the seat and showed no evidence of damage after crash testing. The full product performance report studies can be found at [CenterforPetSafety.org](http://CenterforPetSafety.org).



“After our findings in 2013, we were eager to continue working to bring accountability to the pet products industry, while highlighting the products that will help improve safety for the entire family during their travels together” said Lindsey Wolko, Founder and CEO of Center for Pet Safety. “In partnership with Subaru, the 2015 studies were truly eye-opening and will once again help bring pet safety awareness to millions of pet parents around the globe.”

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Subaru and CPS again worked with MGA Research Corporation, an independent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) contracted testing laboratory, to conduct rigorous crash testing on leading pet crates and carriers that claimed to be “Tested” “Crash Tested” offer “Crash Protection or claim they are for use in a vehicle. The 2015 Crate and Carrier Crashworthiness Studies were performed using specially-designed crash test dogs, designed to approximate the size and weight of real dogs while providing vital baseline performance data. The partnership continues the work that began in 2013 with CPS™ testing of pet harnesses. The resulting Harness Crashworthiness Study uncovered major differences in performance of popular pet restraints, with many resulting in catastrophic failure that could cause serious injury to both the pet and vehicle passengers.

Based on findings from both the Harness Crashworthiness Study in 2013 and the Crate and Carrier Crashworthiness Studies, Subaru and CPS can offer practical safety tips for pet parents traveling with their four-legged friends. Proper crate sizing is vitally important to ensuring safe travels, as pets should always fit snugly in their crate with just enough room to be comfortable. This will help minimize the risk of pet injury in the case of a sudden stop or accident. It is also imperative that pet owners secure crates and carriers for travel using strength-rated cargo area anchor straps and not elastic or rubber bungee cords. Pets come in all shapes, sizes and personalities, any of which may dictate whether to use a crate, carrier or harness when traveling.

To view the full study results or for more information on how to keep pets safe in vehicles, including best practices and travel tips, please visit [CenterforPetSafety.org](http://CenterforPetSafety.org).

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Pint Glass

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### Inside this issue

Bright Outcomes.....	1
DL Gets Around.....	4
Panting.....	7
Poetry Corner.....	6
Rabies Booster.....	4
Say Cheese.....	8
Share the Love.....	10
Travel Crates.....	2
Vestibular Disease.....	9
White Blood Cells.....	5

---

3

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The Center for Pet Safety is not affiliated with the pet product industry. The organization uses scientific testing and references Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards to study pet products and establish criteria and test protocols to measure whether pet safety products provide the protection claimed by advocates and intended by the manufacturer. CPS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit research and consumer advocacy organization dedicated to consumer and companion animal safety. Based in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area, the Center for Pet Safety's mission is to have an enduring, positive impact on the survivability, health, safety and well-being of companion animals and the consumer through scientific research and product testing.

Subaru of America, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd. of Japan. Headquartered at a zero-landfill office in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, the company markets and distributes Subaru vehicles, parts, and accessories through a network of more than 620 retailers across the United States. All Subaru products are manufactured in zero-landfill production plants, and Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc. is the only U.S. automobile production plant to be designated a backyard wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. For additional information, visit [media.subaru.com](http://media.subaru.com).



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration lists pet food recalls at:

<http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/safetyhealth/recallswithdrawals/>

## Dodgerslist Gets Around



The Washington Metro Dachtoberfest was held on November 7, 2015.



Order our free-of-charge brochures and give them to as many vets and pet owners as possible. It is such a good feeling to know YOU may be the one that helped save the life of a dog with IVDD.

<http://www.dodgerslist.com/literature/litorder.html>

## Cats and dogs overdue for a vaccine can have a booster shot

By Katie Burns, Sr. News Producer  
Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association



New guidance in the February 2016 issue of the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association advises that cats and dogs that are exposed to rabies and are overdue for a vaccine can have a booster shot followed by an observation period rather than be subject to quarantine or euthanasia. <https://www.avma.org/News/JAVMANews/Pages/160301a.aspx>

To learn more information about rabies requirements by state, visit: <http://www.rabiesaware.org/>

# The White Blood Cell Count is a Diagnostic Tool for Evaluating your Pet's Health

By Melissa Giese

Reprinted by permission of University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine

When your veterinarian runs a blood test to determine what's ailing Fluffy, do you ever wonder what exactly all those numbers mean? A simple blood test provides a lot of information about your pet's health status. Among other things, the blood test quantifies the white blood cells in dogs and cats, and this information can contribute to an accurate diagnosis of the patient.

"There are typically five types of white blood cells - neutrophils, lymphocytes, monocytes, eosinophils, and basophils - that we look at in a leukon, which is a white blood cell profile," explains Dr. Anne Barger, a veterinary clinical pathologist at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine. "Knowing the levels of each of these cells helps us to understand what type of process might be going on."

## Neutrophils

Neutrophils are the most common white blood cell in dogs and cats. They are the body's "first responders," quickly arriving at the scene of an injury or infection.

"Once neutrophils get to a site, they engulf any microorganisms they find and use specialized enzymes and oxygen radicals to kill them," Dr. Barger says.

These cells also release signals to call other white blood cells and healing agents to a site of inflammation. "An increase in the number of neutrophils, called neutrophilia, may suggest an inflammatory response," says Dr. Barger.

This finding would prompt your veterinarian to investigate further to find the cause of the inflammation, which could be anything from bacterial pneumonia to a fungal infection, such as blastomycoses.

A normal white blood cell count in dogs typically ranges from 6,000 to 17,000 per microliter of blood.

The 'normal' range varies by breed and age.

White blood cells originate in bone marrow and defend the body from infection.

## Lymphocytes

Lymphocytes, the second most common white blood cell in the body, are important for immune response. Lymphocytes are further categorized as T cells or B cells, and both types of lymphocytes are triggered into action when they encounter antigens, which are specific proteins on the surface of an invading microorganism.

"T cells control the immune response at the cellular level by helping to activate other immune cells," says Dr. Barger. "B cells produce antibodies in response to antigens. Because these antibodies are released into fluids in the body rather than acting at the level of the cell, B cells are part of humoral, not cellular, immunity.

"When there is lymphocytosis, which is an increased number of lymphocytes, it could mean there is an immune response, possibly secondary to vaccination or

it may indicate a fear or excitement response," Dr. Barger notes.

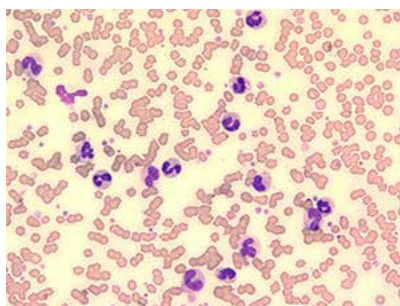
Fear stimulates a fight-or-flight response, releasing epinephrine, which causes lymphocyte numbers to increase for a short time.

Decreased numbers of lymphocytes, called lymphopenia, indicate a stress response or increased levels of cortisol.

"A stress response can occur with any chronic illness. Lymphopenia is the most common thing we see with a stress response," says Dr. Barger.



In 2015, the dachshund was ranked the 13th most popular breed according to the the American Kennel Club.



The purple cells are neutrophils in a blood sample from a patient with a significant inflammatory response.

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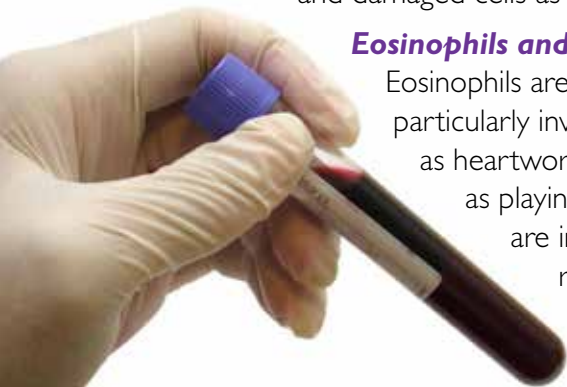
## Inside this issue

- Bright Outcomes..... [1](#)
  - DL Gets Around..... [4](#)
  - Panting..... [7](#)
  - Poetry Corner..... [6](#)
  - Rabies Booster..... [4](#)
  - Say Cheese..... [8](#)
  - Share the Love..... [10](#)
  - Travel Crates..... [2](#)
  - Vestibular Disease..... [9](#)
  - White Blood Cells..... [5](#)
-

# White Blood Cells

## Monocytes

Monocytes are often found in higher numbers during a stress response and also during inflammation. They are involved in the immune response and remove dead and damaged cells as well as microorganisms.



## Eosinophils and Basophils

Eosinophils are a type of white blood cell that are particularly involved with defense against parasites, such as heartworms, roundworms, and hookworms, as well as playing a role in allergic reactions. "Eosinophils are increased especially during hypersensitivity responses. For example, when the skin reacts to something that an animal is allergic to, eosinophils will be present in increased numbers," Dr. Barger says.

Basophils are similar to eosinophils but are present in much smaller quantities. They would also increase during an allergic or parasitic response.

Combined with the other information the blood panel can provide, the white blood cell count is an invaluable diagnostic tool for evaluating your pet's health status.

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Bad back dog t-shirt

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## Because I'm just a dog

By Julie Smith

Because I'm "just a dog" you see,  
I don't sigh and say "why me"  
I just face it - go on living  
and play the hand that I've been given

I need you more now, that is true  
For there are things I just can't do  
The ball you throw I cannot catch  
I can't even lift my leg to scratch

Its embarrassing a little  
that I may need your help to piddle  
But if our roles were in reverse  
I'd be proud to be your nurse

But hey I love you more than ever  
Me give up well yeah like never  
I don't regret what cannot be  
With you my friend, I'll just be me

I'm still me within my soul  
Where it counts I still am whole  
My back is bent and I'm quite lame  
but in my heart I'm still the same



Car magnet

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## When is Panting Abnormal?

With permission of Dr. Nancy Kay, DVM, ACVIM

When we observe a dog who is panting, we tend to take it for granted because this behavior is so darned normal. But, is it always normal? While most panting occurs as a means of counteracting overheating (the canine version of sweating), it can also be prompted by a whole host of other reasons.

### Normal panting

Dogs rely on panting as their primary means for getting rid of excess body heat. Panting allows evaporation of water and heat across the moist surfaces of the lungs, tongue, and surfaces within the mouth. So it makes physiologic sense for a dog to pant on a warm day or following exercise. Dogs do have sweat glands on the undersides of their paws and within their ears, but these glands really have only minimal cooling capabilities.

### Abnormal panting

Panting is considered abnormal when it occurs for reasons other than heat dissipation, and can be recognized by one or more of the following characteristics:

- Appears excessive compared to the dog's normal panting pattern
- Occurs at inappropriate times (when the dog is not overly warm)
- Sounds raspier, louder, or harsher than normal
- Appears more exertional than normal

Listed below are some of the more common causes of abnormal panting:

#### I. Anxiety, stress, or fear

Panting is one of the primary behaviors exhibited by anxious, stressed, or fearful dogs. This "behavioral panting" may be accompanied by other indicators of fear, stress, or anxiety such as pacing, yawning, whining, reclusive behavior, a tucked tail, hiding, clingy behavior, flattened ears, drooling, lip licking, a crouched posture, dilated pupils, trembling, food refusal, and even loss of bladder or bowel control.

#### II. Pain

Excessive panting is a common symptom of discomfort or pain. In fact, dogs who are uncomfortable often exhibit panting well before more obvious indicators of pain, such as whining or limping, arise.

#### III. Heart failure

When the heart is doing an inadequate job of pumping blood around the body, the tissues become deprived of oxygen. One of the best ways to correct this oxygen depletion is by increasing the respiratory rate, and this often results in panting.

#### IV. Lung disease

The lungs are where the transfer of oxygen to the bloodstream takes place. When lung disease prevents this from occurring, oxygen deprivation results. Just as is the case with heart failure, the natural response of the dog is to breathe faster and harder which translates into excessive and exertional panting.

#### V. Anemia

Anemia is defined as a decrease in the red blood cell count. Given that red blood cells are responsible for transporting oxygen to the body's tissues, it makes sense that moderate or severe anemia results in oxygen deprivation. Just as is the case with heart failure and lung disease, the dog's natural response to this is escalated respirations and panting.



Lisa's Peter loves basking in the sun. *The Dodgerslist Gallery:* [dodgerslist.com/gallery/](http://dodgerslist.com/gallery/)



Did you hear about the dog that gave birth to puppies at the side of the road?

She got a ticket for littering!

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### Inside this issue

Bright Outcomes..... [1](#)

DL Gets Around..... [4](#)

Panting..... [7](#)

Poetry Corner..... [6](#)

Rabies Booster ..... [4](#)

Say Cheese..... [8](#)

Share the Love..... [10](#)

Travel Crates..... [2](#)

Vestibular Disease..... [9](#)

White Blood Cells..... [5](#)

---

# Panting

## VI. Laryngeal paralysis

The larynx is the opening to the windpipe (trachea). It contains cartilage flaps that operate like saloon doors- opening wide during breathing and closing during swallowing. With laryngeal paralysis, one or both of the laryngeal cartilages fail to open normally, creating turbulent, restricted airflow and panting that is often raspy sounding and much louder than usual.

## VII. Cushing's disease

Cushing's disease is a hormonal imbalance that occurs primarily in middle aged and older dogs. It is caused by the overproduction of cortisone (steroids) by the adrenal glands. One of the earliest and most common symptoms of this disease is excessive and inappropriate panting. Successful treatment of the Cushing's disease typically resolves the abnormal panting.

Any breed can develop Cushing's, but dachshunds may be more prone to the disease than average. Other breeds that are prone to Cushing's include Yorkshire terriers, poodles, beagles, staffordshires, Jack Russells, boxers, and Boston terriers. Research shows that females are more often impacted than males.

## VIII. Cortisone (steroid) therapy

Treatment with prednisone, prednisolone, or other forms of cortisone mimics Cushing's disease (see above). Many dogs receiving steroids demonstrate excessive and inappropriate panting that typically goes away within a few weeks after the medication is discontinued.

Abnormal panting deserves attention!

Observation of abnormal panting should prompt an office visit with your veterinarian, even if everything else about your dog appears to be perfectly normal. The sooner the cause of the abnormal panting is discovered, the greater the likelihood of a good outcome.

*Dr. Nancy Kay, DVM, ACVIM Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine is the author of "Speaking for Spot: Be the Advocate Your Dog Needs to Live a Happy, Healthy, Longer Life" and "Your Dog's Best Health: A Dozen Reasonable Things to Expect From Your Vet Recipient." Her work has been recognized with numerous awards including the Leo K. Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year, the Best Blog Award from the Dog Writers Association of America, the AKC Club Publication Excellence Award, and more. [www.speakingforspot.com](http://www.speakingforspot.com)*



How does a dog stop a video?

He hits the paws button.



The part of Toto in "The Wizard of Oz" was originally written for a dachshund named Otto.

Otto was replaced with a Cairn Terrier due to anti-German sentiment following the war.



DiAnne's Falkor graduates from obedience class

Say CHEESE



Hey, call me sometime. We'll hang out - Erin's Izzy



# Vestibular Disease

With permission of SAGE Centers for Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Care,  
Concord, California  
(www.sagecenters.com)

Vestibular disease is caused by a problem with the system of balance (the vestibular system). There are two parts to the vestibular system. One part resides outside of the brain in the inner ear and the other resides inside the brain stem.



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## What are the symptoms of vestibular disease?

The most common symptoms of vestibular disease include head tilt, leaning/falling to one side, circling to one side, abnormal eye movements (called nystagmus) and abnormal eye position (called strabismus).

Nausea/vomiting can also occur, especially in the initial stages of the disease. Other symptoms of vestibular disease depend on whether the problem lies outside the brain (called peripheral vestibular disease) or inside the brain (called central vestibular disease).

Dogs with peripheral vestibular disease are usually still mentally alert, even when disoriented due to lack of balance. Dogs with central vestibular disease may be mentally dull, weak, or have problems with nerves that supply the face causing difficulty blinking, swallowing, and chewing.

## What causes vestibular disease?

There are many different causes of vestibular disease. In most cases of peripheral vestibular disease, an underlying cause is not identified and it is called "idiopathic." Peripheral vestibular disease can also be seen in animals with infection, inflammation, or cancer in the ear. A sudden onset of vestibular disease occurs commonly in old dogs and is referred to as "old dog vestibular syndrome." The most common causes of central vestibular disease include brain tumor, stroke, auto-immune brain inflammation, and infection.

## How is vestibular disease diagnosed?

A full neurological exam is necessary to determine whether the symptoms reflect a problem with the peripheral or central vestibular system. Thorough examination of the ear is performed, usually under sedation.



Consultation with a veterinary neurologist may be beneficial.

Veterinary neurologists spend at least 3 years after veterinary school completing additional internships and training in neurology.

The [American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine](http://www.acvim.org) lists board-certified veterinary neurologists.

Imaging of the brain and middle ear is usually recommended either with an MRI or CT scan. In cases of central vestibular disease, cerebrospinal fluid is often collected to look for inflammation, infection, and some types of cancer.

## How is vestibular disease treated?

Treatment for vestibular disease depends on the underlying cause.

### Inside this issue

- Bright Outcomes..... [1](#)
- DL Gets Around..... [4](#)
- Panting..... [7](#)
- Poetry Corner..... [6](#)
- Rabies Booster ..... [4](#)
- Say Cheese..... [8](#)
- Share the Love..... [10](#)
- Travel Crates..... [2](#)
- Vestibular Disease..... [9](#)
- White Blood Cells..... [5](#)

## Vestibular Disease

Animals with idiopathic or "old dog" vestibular disease are treated supportively and typically improve over a period of days. They may need to be hospitalized to receive intravenous fluids and anti-nausea medications over the first couple of days.

Animals with infection of the ear are treated with a combination of antibiotics and sometimes surgery. Animals with tumors in the ear may also undergo surgery depending on the type and extent of the tumor.

Animals with vestibular disease secondary to strokes in the brain typically get better with supportive care over several days or weeks. Tests to look for an underlying cause for the stroke (i.e. heart disease, kidney disease, thyroid disease, high blood pressure) are done to try to prevent future strokes. In many cases, an underlying cause for a stroke is not identified.

### Tips to help your dog through recovery:

1. Create a quiet, safe and familiar place for your dog to rest.
2. Provide good light to help your dog navigate and orient himself.
3. Use a towel or sling for support when walking.

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## SHARE THE LOVE



*Melanie's Chloe has had two surgeries and completely recovered. In fact, except for her scar you would never even suspect that something had happened. Thanks to Dr. Eric Glass of Red Bank Veterinary Hospital in Tinton Falls, New Jersey.*



*Rachel's Dexter was diagnosed with IVDD on June 17, 2015. Here I am 2 months after surgery. I'm walking, running, rolling around, and as happy as can be, if only dad would give me the pretzel in his hand!*



Our inspiration. Dodger was euthanized possibly prematurely because his owner and vet were unaware of the latest treatments available both in traditional and alternative treatments for Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD).

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is presented for educational purposes and as a resource for the dachshund community. The coordinators are not veterinarians or health care professionals. Nothing herein should be interpreted as medical advice and all owners should contact their pet care professional for advice. The coordinators are not responsible for the substance and content contained herein and do not advocate any particular product, item, or position contained herein.