

Suffield Veterinary Hospital November 2013 Patient of the Month

Meet Harry the Cockatiel, our Patient of the Month, owned by Brie-Anna Massoni of Granby, CT. This adorable photo of Harry was taken by Lori Radke of Enfield.

Owner Brie-Anna says: *Two years ago when I moved into Granby I wanted to get a pet. I bought three parakeets over about a 6-month period but none of them worked out for me. Then I went online to research other types of birds and found cockatiels. I went to the Parrot and Bird Emporium that is now located in Agawam, MA and found Harry. I went and visited her about three times a week and put deposits on her until I could bring her home. I got her in December of 2011, right before Christmas. Harry has learned how to shake her foot, turn around on command and recognize my voice when I come home every day after school. She also bobs her head as if to say yes and she can say "hello." She squawks to me every day and we play. She is a very unique bird with lots of personality who loves people! I thank you very much for choosing her to be the pet of the month!*

Dr. Anita Sabellico has recently been treating Harry, and explains that the separation of feathers on Harry's chest reveals her problem. She came in looking like she swallowed a balloon. Her crop was over-distended with food and she was regurgitating. She was very weak and dehydrated.

The crop is the first part of the digestive system of most birds. It is a storage area for food before it enters the stomach. When the crop is overstretched with food it loses its elasticity and muscle tone. This allows the food to sit in the crop and ferment resulting in bacterial and fungal overgrowth. Breeders call this "sour crop."

There are many causes of sour crop. In Harry's case she had been overeating a pelleted food and did not have enough veggies in her diet. Our treatment for her started with emptying the rancid food from her crop. Then we rehydrated her by tube feeding her a mixture of electrolyte fluids and strained vegetable baby food. We then fashioned her a "crop bra" (yes, that's what they're called) using a lightweight elastic bandage to support and help the crop to empty. She was also given oral antibiotics, probiotics and GI stimulants to help with crop emptying and prevent infection. Harry is now eating a higher fiber diet of millet seeds and vegetables. At her 2-week recheck she was back to her old self. It is better to prevent this condition from happening by bringing your bird for annual health checks that may find a crop problem before a bird becomes ill.

In honor of Harry's cuteness and her healthy new diet, we are proud to name her Suffield Veterinary Hospital's November Patient of the Month.



Suffield Veterinary Hospital

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View all of our Patients of the Month on our web site, www.suffieldvet.com