

Suffield Veterinary Hospital March 2011 Patient of the Month

Our Pet of the Month for March is Uno, an affable, 7-year-old male golden retriever owned by Dr. Anita Sabbellico and family. He is shown here in a great portrait by Motophoto in Enfield.

Uno's only wants in life are taking long walks through the lovely parks of Suffield or chasing seagulls along the pristine beaches of Chebeague Island, Maine. Whenever he thinks he's going for a car ride, he grabs one of his fuzzy toys and waits by the door with his tail wagging. His purpose in life is to please his family by never being out of reach for a pet or a hug. Dr. Sabbellico came home from the office one night and Uno greeted her at the door. She gave him a bear hug only to find that the lymph nodes on his neck and shoulders felt extremely enlarged. He was acting perfectly normally, with not a care in the world except hoping to be fed his supper asap.

Dr. Sabbellico knew she had to bring him in to SVH for a needle biopsy, blood work and radiographs to sort out this sudden change. He was a stellar patient and the tests were performed easily. The diagnosis of lymphoma was made the next day. This is a malignant cancer of the lymphoid system which can involve lymph nodes, spleen, liver and bone marrow. Chemotherapy is the treatment of choice. Without any treatment, most dogs succumb to the disease in 2-3 months.

Chemotherapy is generally well tolerated by dogs and cats. Our hope with treatment is remission, which means there is no clinical evidence of the disease. This does not mean the animal is cured and most require ongoing treatment to keep them in remission. Our overall goal with treatment is to improve and then maintain quality of life. There are many treatment options which can be explained by a veterinary oncologist. It is important to remember that there are no right or wrong treatment options. Each protocol has its own

advantages and disadvantages. The right treatment protocol is the one that is best for all members of your family and that does not place an emotional or financial burden upon you.



So for now Uno is having no complications from treatment and his lymph nodes have shrunk to normal size. He has no idea that he has a life-ending disease and thinks his car rides to the vet and meeting the compassionate staff there are fun. We will take things one week at a time and watch him closely. We will let him enjoy a dog's life to the fullest but never let him suffer. For his wonderful personality and resilience, we are proud to name Uno Suffield Veterinary Hospital's March 2011 Patient of the Month.

Suffield Veterinary Hospital

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