

Suffield Veterinary Hospital February 2019 Patient of the Month

Meet Tutah, a 14-year-old cat owned by the Mills family of Coventry, CT. This adorable photo was recently taken by Garrett Mills. Here is Tutah's story, told by Karen Mills: "Our family adopted Tutah when she was about 9 months old. Although she arrived at our home with the name "Lily," my two young children promptly decided that such a common name wouldn't do, and decided that she was "Tutah," which means... nothing, really.



She has always been a cute and feisty lady, and is one of those cats who accepts humans petting her on her own terms. For most of her adult life, Tutah had a leaky left eye, some sort of chronic low-level infection/irritation that never seemed to bother her much. But this past summer, her eye got very infected and ulcerated, and Dr. Huntington at Suffield Vet agreed with me that the kindest thing to do would be to remove the eye. Once that decision had been reached, Tutah went in to SVH for routine pre-surgery bloodwork, which showed that she was extremely hyperthyroid! I had noticed that she had become pretty skinny, and that her fur was kind of greasy looking lately, but I had attributed that to her becoming an elderly cat. (With hindsight, I feel that I should have known better, having been lucky enough to work as a vet tech/administrative assistant at Suffield Veterinary Hospital myself from 1986-1992!) We put Tutah on thyroid meds immediately, having to hold off on her eye surgery until that level was stabilized, which took about 2 weeks.

Tutah has been so much happier and more comfortable since becoming a one-eyed kitty pirate and having her hyperthyroidism regulated. I now give her a prescription chewable "treat" twice a day for her thyroid (but of course, being the clever girl that she is, she won't eat it as a treat — I have to smush it up in some yummy canned tuna to hide it). She has gained back her weight to a healthy level and is back to being her usual fuzzy, feisty self! We hope to enjoy her presence for several more years to come, and we are very thankful to the wonderful staff at Suffield Veterinary Hospital."

Hyperthyroidism — overproduction of thyroid hormones — is surprisingly common in geriatric cats. Usually caused by a benign growth on the thyroid gland, affected cats generally lose a great deal of weight despite maintaining a good appetite. Left untreated, hyperthyroidism eventually leads to emaciation and heart failure. The best thing about this condition is that there are several effective ways to successfully treat it, as you can see with Tutah.

For helping us spread the word about this common condition, and in honor of her cute old-lady feistiness, we are proud to name Tutah our February 2019 Patient of the Month.

Suffield Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Ann Huntington ❖ Dr. Anita Sabellico

Dr. Dawn Burke ❖ Dr. Daniel Rothbart

577 East Street South (Route 159), Suffield, CT 06078 (860) 668-4041

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