

Suffield Veterinary Hospital April 2020 Patient of the Month

Meet Luna, a one-year-old bunny owned by Nina Bump of Enfield. Beautiful Luna was adopted in June 2019 from Dakin Humane Society. Nina initially went to Dakin for another bun she had seen on their website but Luna was in the pen right next to the one she was looking at, and was unbelievably friendly and lovable so Nina just had to get her! Luna was brought home to the other bun and they almost instantly bonded. Then, some trouble started. As Nina describes it:



"I noticed that she was eating kind of funny, like she was bobbing her head up and down trying to get food to the side of her mouth. I actually thought it was funny at first and then I just had a hunch I should check her teeth. I noticed her front teeth were extremely overgrown curling into her mouth. I was surprised because she was still very willing to eat and run around and chew things, so I never would've noticed if she weren't eating funny!"

Luna was treated by our rabbit expert, Dr. Anita Sabellico, after a previous visit to an emergency hospital because of her difficulty chewing. Her front teeth were trimmed because they were not aligned properly and were causing her discomfort. This is a condition in rabbits called Incisor Malocclusion. Rabbits are herbivores and eat a high fiber diet. This requires teeth that continually grow to replace the wear and tear that occurs on the tips of the teeth when eating coarse grasses and hay. If the upper and lower teeth do not meet perfectly the teeth overgrow in a very crooked fashion resulting in discomfort, drooling and eventual weight loss. Rather than putting Luna through monthly teeth trims under anesthesia her front teeth were removed as a permanent solution. Because she is an indoor pet she does not need her front teeth to graze on grass like rabbits in the wild. She is now able to take rabbit pellets and leafy greens into her mouth with her tongue and chew with her molar teeth. Again, Nina describes Luna's current status:

"Luna is litter box trained, and free roams - meaning she has complete free access to hop around my apartment as she pleases. She loves to snuggle with her bun friend, play with cardboard boxes, and bury herself under blankets or towels. Her favorite treats are dried papaya and Craisins. She weirdly does not like carrots, despite the cliché. Ever since she got her teeth removed, you can almost always find her sticking her tongue out. She is learning to grab food with her tongue and is already a pro at grabbing her hay and pellets! And every day at precisely 8 p.m., without fail, she completes her nightly zoomies around my apartment."

Not all veterinarians are experienced in rabbit diseases and care. We are fortunate that, for over 30 years, Dr. Anita Sabellico has brought her caring expertise in bunnies, ferrets, pet birds, and other small mammals to our practice. And we are proud to name darling little Luna, featured here in a photo by our Veterinary Technician Jen Haire, our April 2020 Suffield Veterinary Hospital Patient of the Month.

Suffield Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Ann Huntington ❖ Dr. Anita Sabellico

Dr. Dawn Burke ❖ Dr. Daniel Rothbart ❖ Dr. Emilie Laston

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