

Suffield Veterinary Hospital February 2023 Patient of the Month

Meet Trace, an eleven-year-old neutered male golden retriever owned by our own Dr. Dawn Burke. He is a living example of how early detection of diseases can save lives.

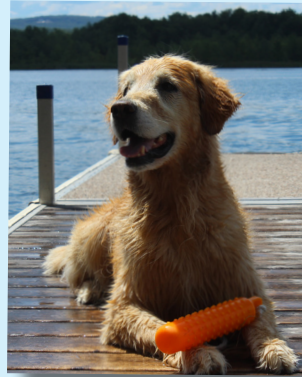
Trace is part of a nationwide Golden Retriever Lifetime Health Study undertaken years ago by the Morris Foundation. Since before his second birthday, he's had complete blood work done for this study every January, then after age seven the frequency became every six months. As Dr. Burke describes it:

In July of 2021 he had a very mild increase in one of his liver enzymes (ALP). At his annual study the ALP had gone up a bit more and by July 2022 it had nearly tripled. Trace was acting completely normal, still playing with my other dog, swimming just about every day and enjoying the game of chase he loves to play with me. Due to the increase in this enzyme we did x-rays which showed an abnormal liver shape. I scheduled an appointment with Dr. Claire Weigand, a board certified internal medicine specialist, for an ultrasound. She found a solitary large tumor on the left side of his liver. Most often, large solitary tumors are hepatocellular carcinoma. If the tumor is in a part of the liver where it can be operated on, the surgical removal is often curative.

Surgical specialist Dr. John Benson at Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Hospital in South Deerfield, MA was able to successfully remove a liver tumor larger than a cantaloupe! Biopsy confirmed the hepatocellular carcinoma and surgery would be curative. After 3 weeks of recovery Trace returned to all his normal activities including swimming. A follow-up ultrasound three months after surgery showed that his liver looked normal.

Trending blood work and following up with the x-rays and ultrasound saved Trace's life. Had I waited until he was sick, most likely the tumor would not have been able to be removed. Trace has been a wonderful pet but also the best performance dog I have had, excelling in obedience and the field. I'm glad that I was able to help him continue to enjoy his life and the things he loves to do!

For reminding us all that efforts to detect disorders early with regular examinations and blood work can be life saving, we are proud to name Trace the February 2023 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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View all of our Patients of the Month on our web site, www.suffieldvet.com