

## Suffield Veterinary Hospital May 2023 Patient of the Month

Meet Carl, a handsome young cat owned by Sara Phillips of East Granby. Sara adopted him when he was about one and a half years old from a family who could no longer take care of him due to his horribly painful mouth problems. Carl was born in a barn and then rescued from there because no one was caring for the barn cats. Over the last several months his mouth problems worsened until recently he was not able to eat, not even soft food. He would cry and scream because it hurt so badly, and was only fine when on medicine. He lost a good amount of weight since his eating habits were so minimized. He also had a swollen lip which was noticeable from the outside.

Carl was suffering from a condition known as feline caudal stomatitis (FCS). This is an inflammatory condition that is not yet fully understood but results in an allergic response to the bacteria and plaque on their teeth. Veterinarians will often test for *Bartonella henselae* (causative agent of cat scratch fever), FeLV, and FIV in a cat diagnosed with stomatitis. However, many cats suffer this debilitating condition but an underlying cause is never identified. Stomatitis is differentiated from gingivitis by inflammation behind the teeth in the mouth.

Stomatitis results in painful inflammation and ulceration of the oral cavity, and owners often notice their cat pawing at their mouth, having difficulty eating, or even having foul smelling breath or saliva. Severely affected cats are unable to groom themselves, so they often look disheveled.

Stomatitis is usually treated with extraction of all the teeth behind the canines, so that there is no bacteria or plaque for the cat to have a reaction to. Dogs can suffer a similar condition known as CUPS (canine ulcerative parodontal stomatitis) and people can also develop stomatitis. In both cases the underlying cause is often unknown.

Carl had all of his back teeth removed on a Friday in March. As Sarah reports:

*"When he came home that Friday he was a bit groggy and sluggish, but he still wanted to cuddle. He did not eat on the day of surgery but the day after he gobbled up his breakfast with no pain. Ever since the surgery he has been eating and drinking normally. He has even tried to eat some dry food without crying! The dental surgery has completely changed his life for the better, and he just turned two so he has a lot of time ahead of him. He is such a loving and special cat and his story should be heard! Although he is a shy kitty at the vet hospital, he is a love bug at home. Like a dog, he comes when he is called and will follow me around the house. Whenever I am asleep he will come lay on me and almost wrap his arm around my neck, like a hug."*

For being living proof that addressing dental problems can be life changing for our pets, we are grateful to name cute, cuddly Carl our May 2023 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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