

# *Suffield Veterinary Hospital*

## September 2024 Patient of the Month

Meet Rylee, a 1-year-old Scotch Collie, also known as an "Old-Time Collie." Rylee's owner Sarah shares her story:

We got Rylee as a puppy after doing a lot of research to find a breed that would best fit our lifestyle. The Old Time Scotch Collie seemed to be just that. We have a farm so we needed a dog that would be gentle with other animals, but also have enough energy and drive to be outside working with us. Rylee was a cautious but confident puppy and continues to show us just how smart she is. She loves attention, eating, and will play frisbee for days.

A farm has many risks for people and animals alike, so training Rylee to be safe when we go to the farm is a task we don't take lightly. We are still working on a lot of things, especially her tendency to get into things — and training "leave it" has been a top priority. We use rodenticides on the farm, but bait boxes are used so I was not concerned that she could get to them. But mistakes happen — and what happened to Rylee was a huge and very scary mistake!

When we noticed blood in her mouth one Sunday, I was concerned, but decided to wait until Monday morning because she still had energy and was eating. Monday morning she was a different dog and I called Suffield Vet to get an early appointment. When I was told her symptoms could be a sign of toxicity, the rodenticide popped into my head.

We hope this story helps other dog owners. Even with the knowledge I had of my dog — and even with our efforts of keeping rodenticides out of her reach, she found it. We are just so thankful that she is still here with us and we know this should not ever happen again — responsibility is very high when you use pesticides around your property and the risks should be taken extremely seriously.

Dr. Laston reports that she evaluated Rylee upon her arrival on that Monday. Rylee was pale, lethargic, coughing up blood, and bleeding from her gums with no obvious injury or tooth disease. Bloodwork and x-rays confirmed that Rylee was bleeding into her lungs, and Dr. Laston suspected rat poison ingestion. When the owners were questioned, it was determined that Rylee had access to rat poison on a farm that she frequented. Dr. Laston transferred Rylee to a 24-hour ER for 2 days of intensive supportive care, and Rylee was eventually released with a good prognosis.

There are 2 common types of rat poison on the market. Brodifacoum is a vitamin K antagonist, which blocks the animal's ability to form blood clots which ultimately leads to their death. The silver lining with this product, is that when caught early, Vitamin K supplementation treats rodenticide toxicity in cats and dogs with good success and prognosis. Bromethalin is a newer generation rat poison that affects the nervous system. It causes swelling of the nervous system, and ultimately death. Unfortunately there is no antidote for this rat poison, so it is much more dangerous for household pets. The doctors at Suffield Veterinary Hospital recommend trapping rodents without toxic bait whenever pets are present.

Rylee was a very lucky girl to have pulled through, and she is expected to live a long and happy life. For reminding pet owners of the risks of poisoning, we are delighted to name Rylee our September 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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