



Dog Meadow – March/April 2023

We've been through a rather strange winter with temperatures varying drastically and very little snow. It's been a while since you've received a newsletter. This a lengthy one. Going forward our newsletter will be sent out bi-monthly (every two months). Our loyal followers will be happy to receive them. Those that prefer not to receive them are free to unsubscribe and you'll be removed completely from our system. We won't be offended. Nevertheless, we thank you for your support. We're happy that you are joining us for a summary of some of the goings-on at Dog Meadow.



Not being able to stand and walk, Ashley had difficulty eating her meals during her bout with FCE.

What is Fibrocartilagenous embolism (FCE)?

Fibrocartilagenous embolism, or FCE in dogs, is a common disorder in which a piece of fibrous cartilage enters the blood supply and obstructs or reduces the passage of blood, and causes a “stroke” to the spinal cord. When the flow of blood is reduced or stopped, that part of the spinal cord goes without oxygen and nutrients and the neurons in the spinal cord become dysfunctional and can die off. This causes temporary paralysis or inability to use the limb(s)

How is fibrocartilagenous embolism diagnosed?

A presumptive diagnosis can be made based on the history and a thorough neurological examination. With a sudden onset of neurologic weakness and absence of pain, a fibrocartilagenous embolism is the most probable diagnosis.

Spinal radiographs (X-rays) are helpful to rule out a fracture or other traumatic cause.

The best way to definitively diagnose FCE is to perform an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) of the part of the spinal cord affected. This will help to confirm a diagnosis and to rule out other causes of neurologic weakness. However, this is very expensive.

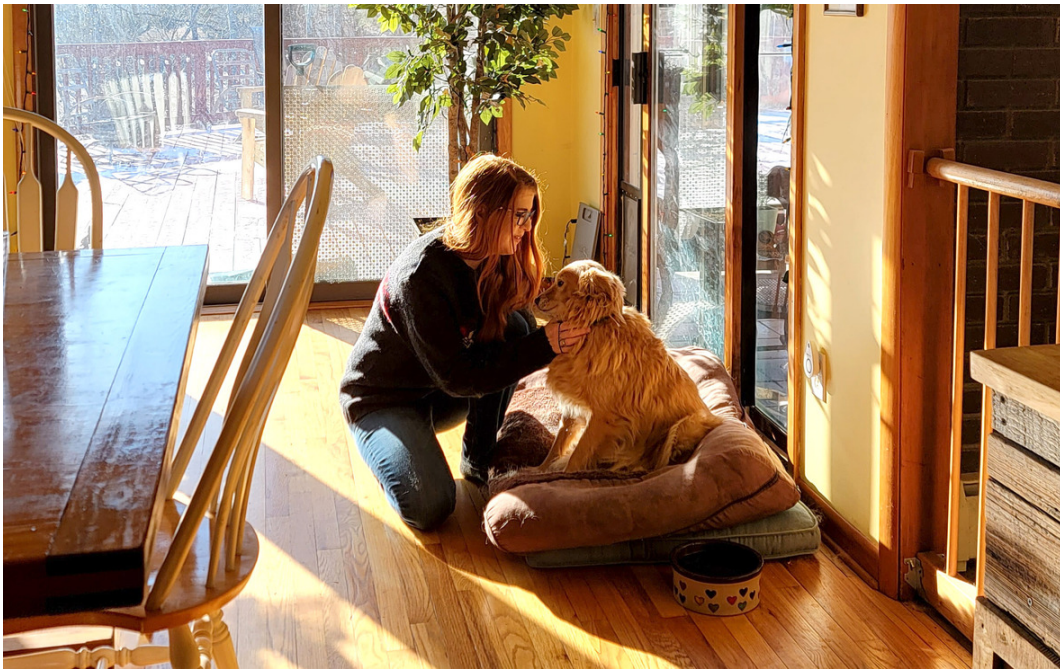
In the case of Ashley, it came on suddenly while outside one January day. She was playing in the snow and suddenly was unable to use her hind legs. She was taken to the vet and she was given muscle relaxers to ease her recovery.

Ashley obviously needed assistance getting around and a lifting harness was used to raise her hind legs in order to help her get around. It was especially difficult for her to step on smooth surfaces such as wood flooring and the dog living room, so she

was basically placed on bedrest and we worked with her throughout the day to have her go outside or have her meals.

There is really no direct therapy as there is no way to remove the fibrocartilage from the blood vessels in the spinal cord. Therefore, time is the only thing that we can rely on. Some dogs recover quickly while others can take up to four months to recover.

Ashley had to rely on us to get around. It took her a few days to re-develop the will and skill to walk around outside on the grass and rough surfaces, but it was a few weeks before she was able to walk on smooth flooring. It took her about 6 weeks for her to completely recover, but in her head, there are places that she remembers slipping on and still treads carefully. She probably thinks that she will develop the same symptoms again.



Ashley receives extra love during her recovery from FCE.



Laura post-surgery and walking in the meadow a few days later.

LAURA'S TRIBULATIONS

It was supposed to be a routine surgery. Ovarian cysts with high cancer markers and a uterine wall with fibroids. It all had to come out. It took about two hours for all of this to happen.

Laura spent the night Wednesday night in the hospital after the surgery to make certain her pain was being managed. She was sent home the following day and was told to do a bit of walking after a few days. She followed the doctor's orders. On the fifth day, the pain, which was supposed to have been gone at this point, was sharp and felt as if a knife was being pushed into her. She also had developed a fever. Late Tuesday night, six days after the surgery, I rushed her to the emergency room at St. John's University Hospital in Yonkers. It was the smart thing to do as they had all of her information there and her doctor was there as well. The cat scan showed an abscess in her pelvic area. She had to stay a few days and after more tests, the specialist did not recommend surgery. It was too close to nerves, that if damaged, could cause further issues such as paralyzing her legs. The infectious disease doctor recommended an antibiotic regimen. After another day to ensure all was going well, Laura was allowed to go home but was first given a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) in order to continue in-home I.V. treatments of antibiotics for 14 days.



A 14-day in-home treatment was prescribed to Laura. It was all laid out by a nurse who showed us exactly what needed to be done.

Laura's activity was limited, of course. While I care for the dogs and the property and deal with the business, Laura helps with the day-to-day of taking care of mostly the farm animals and running a large part of the home. She keeps the stalls clean, carries buckets, mucks out areas of the coop, and brings in eggs, not to mention that she loves planning meals and keeping a nice home. She was relegated to the bed. Her recovery time was supposed to be two weeks. Those two weeks were

taken up by all the treatments and the inability to do her usual things. I was more than happy to care for her. I had a great time making her meals and adding more steps to my days.

After the treatments were done the cat scan showed that all was well and the abscess was gone.

As of this writing, Laura has gone back to work teaching music to her students and even put on the best play of Peter Pan since she has been teaching there. She worked her butt off prepping the kids before she left and left a very detailed program for a substitute to follow. She has been hiking the property and has returned to the gym's treadmill. She is still not allowed to lift until another two months or so. Overall she is doing well and I am helping her with the heavier tasks. We've gone back to our usual doing things together and even enjoyed a dance once again at our local favorite pub.



Laura receives a PICC line to feed her antibiotics. She was also showered with flowers and gifts.

The flowers and gifts are appreciated but even more, is the support that we received from many of you during this time. We thank everyone that took the time to stop by to help us. We also thank our clients for understanding that I was traveling back and forth to the hospital and for their patience with picking up their dogs at a later hour. I

rely on a small group of people to fill in for me when emergency situations like this happen. A huge thanks to them, too!



Antonio, once a gentle rooster, has become a handful lately!

ANTONIO & FRANKIE - OUR CHALLENGING ROOSTER RESCUES

The Brahma Rooster is traditionally called The Gentle Giant. They are one of the largest breeds of roosters.

Antonio, a Brahma, was rescued about a year ago and placed in the small coop outside until he learned that it was home. He was then allowed to free-range and welcomed our guests daily. He was later joined by Frankie-Baby, a Buff Orpington rooster. Frankie was also rescued because that's what we do. They were best of friends for almost a year until one day they had a fight. It was a bloody mess. Honestly, we're not sure what caused it, but it could be hormonal and the fact that it is their first spring and they knew the hens were laying eggs. Nevertheless, for their safety, they had to be separated. So Frankie, being the more tamed of the two, and having been raised by a family who handled him a lot, was brought inside to become a house rooster with access to the backyard. Now we had to manage our dogs and all the things that came with having a rooster free-ranging in the yard. Some things were easy, such as time and food, but not the rooster poop. So the dogs ate some poop for a while.



Frankie spends his mornings and nights in the house.



A new student?

Then Antonio decided that he needed someone to mess with. So he started "coming after" me and some others that entered the property. It was especially bad when a person turned their back on him. I eventually reached and grabbed him and brought him inside as well. This gave us the opportunity to clean up the dried blood on his feathers and make sure he was fine. We discovered that Frankie had pecked on his head pretty hard and removed quite a bit of feathers from the top.



The Horror! Both were a bloody mess after their fight. Roosters are fearless.



Even when separated, Frankie and Antonio fought through the fence. Tighter weave fencing was added in the lower portion so they were not able to hurt each other..



Antonio's new home.

It was almost impossible to avoid getting rushed by Antonio each time I went out to deal with clients. But I was more afraid of him possibly rushing a client. Therefore, it was decided to bring him to the back of the house. But that was where Frankie hung out? Hmmm? What to do now? So a run was purchased and a small coop was built to house him. Frankie was now brought to the front of the house. Now here's the funny part, Frankie had become used to coming inside the house to his crate for the night through our back sliding door. Now that he was out front, he didn't want to go back to using the coop outside. Instead, he literally knocked on our front door to be let in. He is now coming in every night and having a few treats before he goes to bed.



Apparently, Frankie shows love toward Laura by dancing around her in circles.

Now Frankie performs a "love" dance around Laura and is very affectionate. Frankie used to rush at Laura for a while as well, but she worked with him and trained him to be more loving. Apparently, he had been handled a lot by children so it was easier to do this. On the other hand, Antonio struts around his run looking like a menace. I pick up Antonio every now and then and carry him around. We feed him treats and walk in his run. Because of his size, he looks scarier than he is. Unfortunately, Antonio wasn't handled as much as Frankie was before we got him so it's going to take a lot more work to train him. We may just get them both to get along and stop Antonio from chasing people. You can follow his progress on our Instagram feed.



MAKING DOG FOOD AT HOME

Many people feel that, with recent issues with commercial dog foods, they would like to make dog food at home. This is certainly something you can do, although it's always best to check with your vet before changing your dog's diet. There are two important points that we've come across regarding homemade diets:

1) Calcium: Dogs require a balance of calcium and phosphorus in their diet. Meat is full of phosphorus, so in a natural setting, dogs would obtain calcium from the bones of the animal that they are eating. However, if you just feed dog meat without bones, the dog will be deficient in calcium. That's why calcium is an important addition to a home-cooked diet that does not include bones.

2) Raw diets: While raw meat with bones may seem an ideal solution, purchasing raw meat is not the same thing as obtaining it naturally. If a dog were to capture an animal and eat the meat and bones of the animal immediately that is quite different from eating raw meat that has been sitting around in a meat processing plant and the grocery store or even from an organic farm if it has been sitting around for a few days. It might not be the best idea to eat raw meat unless it has just been freshly killed.

Laura cooked for her dogs for years when they had cancer to improve their nutrition.

Here's the recipe she used found in veterinarian-recommended sources:

- 2 pounds meat ground or cut up: (beef, boneless chicken thighs, pork, add some fish or liver if you like)
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup uncooked rice, (or substitute 2 chopped sweet potatoes)
- 1 cup water
- 16-ounce pkg. frozen veggies – (any kind without corn or cabbage,) or two cups of fresh chopped carrots, or broccoli
- 2-4 fish oil capsules (optional)

2 eggs

1 teaspoon ground baked eggshell or other calcium sources

Crack eggs set aside and bake eggshells on low in a toaster oven.

Cook meat in oil in a big pot.

Add rice, water, and veggies, and cook low for 20 minutes.

Stir in fish oil capsules and egg. Then put eggshells in a coffee grinder to grind it to a powder and mix it in.

This feeds a 50-pound dog for 4 days. You can double or quadruple the recipe, use a huge pot, and divide it into daily-use containers, freezing some.

You can substitute cooked 2 cups of sweet potatoes for rice.

You can make the whole thing in a slow cooker. Just place all ingredients in except the egg and slow cook.

Your dog will look so healthy after a week or two.

One dog Laura had was given 6 weeks to live and went into remission on this diet for 2 years.



Laura with Jack and Ashley

Dog Meadow Blog

Laura Evans, Lady of Dog Meadow, writes a Dog Meadow blog entry on a weekly basis (more or less). She shares life at Dog Meadow as well as trials and tribulations in life as a whole. Every entry includes an easy-to-follow recipe at the end. We encourage you to read it **here** and please subscribe.

Did you know...

You can do something to help Dog Meadow? Yes, you can! And it takes less than a minute. If you follow us on Instagram or Facebook, "liking" and/or sharing our posts greatly increases our exposure and ensures that your dog will always have doggy friends to play with here at Dog Meadow.

Bookings

Please remember to book your dog's stay early at Dog Meadow. **Booking requests must be made and confirmed via email.** We require deposits for all stays. It is up to you to reach out to us if and when you are ready to book your dog's stay. Booking requests must be made and confirmed via email. If you do not have an email confirming a reservation for specific dates, you do not have a reservation.

With that said, we remind you to make sure that your dog's vaccinations are up-to-date. We encourage you to check your records and make appointments with your dog's vet, if needed, to ensure that he is in good health. You can find our **requirements** on our website.

Finally, let's all be safe and kind to one another.



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