



Providing Care for Treatable Dogs and Cats

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Our Ultimate Goal

- Increase number of adoptions, lives saved, and minimize length of stay
- Includes:
 - Intake procedures/plans
 - Provision of basic physical and mental health requirements
 - Re-assessment of medical/behavioral health
 - Treatment of existing medical and behavior problems



Humane housing and rehoming of shelter pets **should** involve several steps....

- 1) Evaluation of health and welfare
- 2) Identifying and assigning pets to categories:
 - Healthy
 - Treatable - Rehabilitatable
 - Treatable - Manageable
 - Unhealthy and Untreatable
- 3) Preventing medical/behavioral deterioration
- 4) "Treating" the treatable!

Identifying and Assigning Pets to Categories



- ~~Healthy~~
 - Treatable -
Rehabilitatable
 - Treatable –
Manageable
 - ~~Unhealthy and
Untreatable~~
- By means of:
 - Obtaining intake information
 - Initial medical/behavioral assessment
 - Triage/Shelter rounds

Shelter Wellness Programs

Wellness = Physical Health + Emotional
(Behavioral) Health



Shelter Wellness Programs

Two Options for Physical Health:

- Prevention
- Treatment





Disease Prevention

- Prevention is the key to not having a surplus of “treatable” animals
- Keeping animals healthy improves adoptions, keeps costs down, improves morale, and gives the public a positive view of the shelter

Disease Prevention

How do we keep them healthy?

- Wellness Programs
- Cleaning and Disinfection
- Prevention of Overcrowding!





Shelter Wellness Programs

Why are Wellness Programs Important for Shelters?

- Prevention is usually cheaper than treatment
- A diseased animal in the shelter puts other animals at risk
- ➔ ■ Disease may result in the euthanasia or death of animals in the shelter



Shelter Wellness Programs

To Maintain Physical Health:

- Vaccination
- Parasite Prevention/Control
- Proper Nutrition
- (Spay/Neuter)
- (Animal Identification)

Intake Assessment

- Intake Forms
 - Medical and behavioral history
 - Accuracy of information??
- Intake Evaluation
 - Medical evaluation
 - Behavioral evaluation



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Intake Strategies for Shelters

On intake, every animal should receive:

- Quick Health Assessment
- Vaccination
- Internal and External Parasite Control





Intake Assessments

Quick Health Assessments

- Check for noticeable medical problems (lameness, aggressiveness, skin disease, nasal/ocular discharge)
- Can be performed by trained veterinary technician



Shelter Wellness Programs

Vaccination Strategies

- Different than protocols for private pets
- NOT a “magic bullet” for disease prevention
- Should reflect the needs of each individual shelter
- All animals should be vaccinated against core diseases



Shelter Wellness Programs

- Vaccination is the first defense in preventing disease
- Practice population medicine, not individual small animal medicine
- Consider all animals **unvaccinated**
- Vaccinate all animals with core vaccines *regardless* of health status



Shelter Wellness Programs

- **All** dogs and cats \geq 4 weeks old should be vaccinated on intake into the shelter
- Puppies and kittens should receive a booster vaccination every 2 weeks until 16 weeks of age
- Adults should receive a booster vaccination 2-3 weeks from original vaccination
- Use modified-live or recombinant vaccines!

Vaccination

Core Vaccines-Dogs:

- Distemper
- Parainfluenza
- Parvovirus
- Adenovirus-2
- *Bordetella*



Vaccination

Core Vaccines-Cats:

- Panleukopenia
- Feline Herpesvirus-1
- Calicivirus





Cleaning and Disinfection

Why is Sanitation Important?

- Reduces infection rates of diseases
- Reduces the dose of infectious material required to cause disease
- Improves public image
- Animals (and people!) are healthier



Cleaning and Disinfection

Steps:

- Physical removal of organic debris (blood, feces, urine, etc.)
- Sanitize using detergent (any soap will do!)
- Rinse!
- DISINFECT with appropriate disinfectant and contact time!
- RINSE AGAIN!!!

Why do we rinse?





Cleaning and Disinfection

For Disinfectants to Work:

- Use correct concentration (follow label directions!)
- Adequate contact time
- Disinfectant should be applied to a clean, non-porous surface
- Disinfectants and detergents should not be mixed!

Daily Rounds

- Necessary for continual monitoring of the health of the shelter population
- Things change on a daily basis!





Daily Rounds

If a Veterinarian is NOT available...

- Can be accomplished by TRAINED technicians or kennel staff
- This person should be able to recognize signs of common diseases in the shelter

Daily Rounds

Canine Respiratory Disease



Skin Disease



Traumatic Injuries



Feline Respiratory Disease





Training Personnel

- Should be trained by a licensed veterinarian familiar with common diseases in a shelter
- Must be able to recognize gross abnormalities that can be brought to veterinarian's attention
- Veterinarian should be available for consultation

Daily Rounds

Once identified, sick or injured animals can be treated at the shelter or transferred for further care





Can We Treat Him?

Different for every shelter! Depends on:

- Resources
- Medical Capabilities
- Staffing
- Volunteer/Foster Network

Triage

“Sorting and allocating aid on the basis of need for or likely benefit from medical treatment.”



Triage





Triage

Dependent on available resources...

- Is a veterinarian available?
- Are medical supplies available?
- Is intensive care available?
- Is there a foster network in place?
- Are rescue organizations available to assume responsibility for further care?



Can We Treat Him?

- Don't attempt if resources are unavailable
- Animal's welfare is the utmost priority
- DO NOT allow any animal to suffer needlessly!



Treatment

Adoption/Transfer Coordinator is Key!

- Must have someone designated to call rescue organizations, veterinary hospitals, and foster homes when an animal needs to be transferred for medical reasons
- Can be a Volunteer or Board Member!

Treatment

- Utilize Local Veterinarians
- Develop Foster Care Programs
- Specialty Veterinary Hospitals?



Foster Programs

Advantages:

- Improves Morale
- Improves Public Image
- May Improve Overall Shelter Health



Resources

- Volunteers
- Rescue Groups
- Veterinarians





Assumptions About Treatability

Many animals can be significantly helped with **modest** care that requires little money, time, and resources

- Don't assume the worst!
- Looks can be deceiving!



Assumptions About Treatability

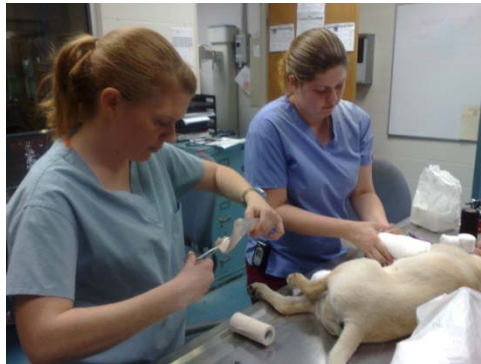
Examples of easily treatable injuries:

- Certain long bone fractures in puppies and kittens
- Abscesses
- Aural Hematomas
- Lacerations
- Embedded Collars

Assumptions About Treatability



"Sydney"





Assumptions About Treatability

Examples of injuries requiring more intensive treatment:

- Certain long bone fractures
- Open Fractures
- Degloving Injuries
- Head Trauma

Assumptions About Treatability



"Chico"

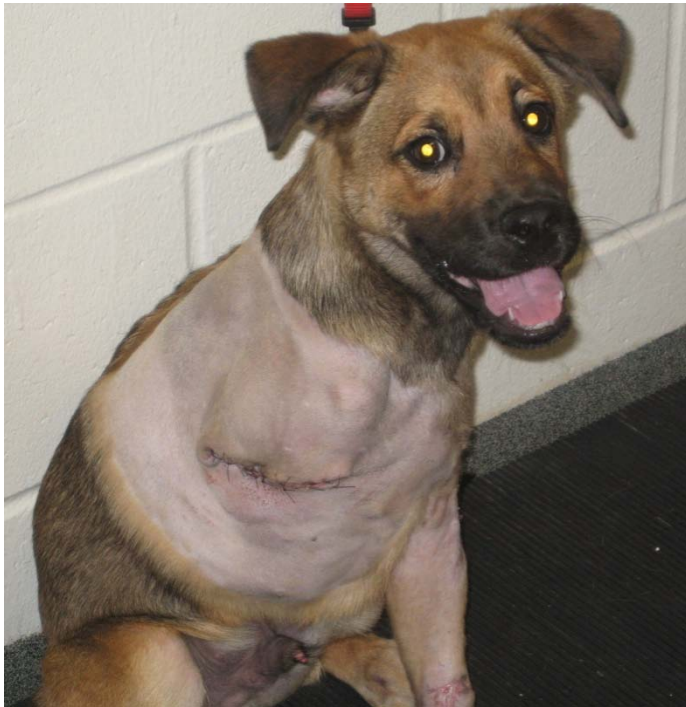


When things go bad...

"Bruce"



They may not be as bad as they seem!



"Bruce" and "Maggie"





Assumptions About Treatability

Examples of treatable diseases:

- Some respiratory infections
- Mild diarrhea
- Scabies
- Ear Mites
- Heartworm Infection?



Assumptions About Treatability

Examples of illnesses requiring more intensive treatment:

- Parvovirus/Panleukopenia
- Distemper Virus
- Generalized Demodecosis
- Ringworm
- Heart Disease/Heartworm Infection?

Is this Treatable?

"Taylor"

- 3 year old mixed breed
- Starvation
- Dehydration



Assumptions About Treatability

If we had assumed the
worst...

"Taylor" would not
have had this happy
ending!





Assumptions about Treatability

Yellow



Assumptions about Treatability

Toby



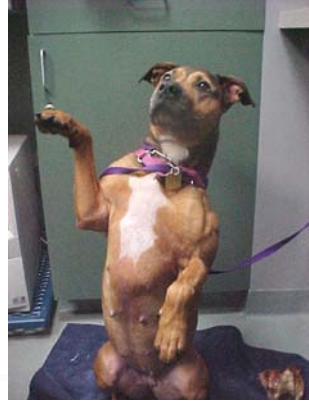
Feral Cats vs. Fearful but Potentially Friendly Cats

- Identification
 - At Intake
 - Interview/questionnaire for relinquishing party
 - Five days of optimal behavioral care
 - Minimize stressful handling
 - Providing hiding place/perch
 - Monitor food/water intake
 - Quiet!
 - Desensitization to people
 - Re-evaluate
- feral cats... 'treatable' ?

DNA



Mars Wisdom Panel



- 130 breeds
 - AKC
 - UKC
- 84% accuracy for parentage
- Mars claims similar accuracy for more distant relatives



Cocker
Spaniel

Trace
Amount



Shiba
Inu



Labrador
Retriever

Significant Amount



BUDDY



Breed Identification

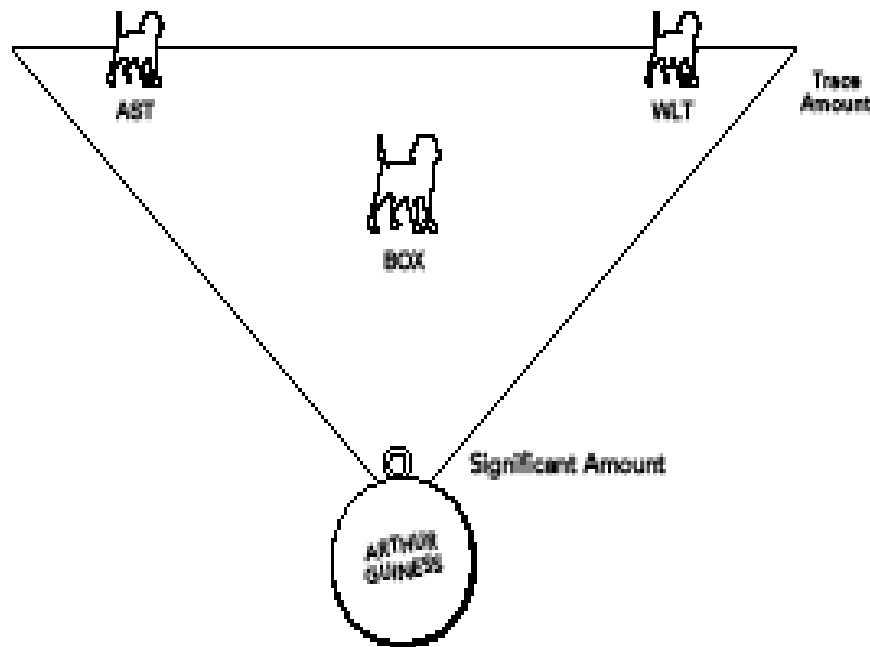
- Are we able to accurately identify breeds???

Guinness



WHAT BREEDS MAKE UP ARTHUR GUINNESS?

Arthur Guinness is unique, unlike any other dog in the world. Results like Arthur Guinness's are found in about 70% of mixed breed dogs in the U.S. Arthur Guinness's ancestry contains some Boxer (BOX) and also includes distant traces of American Staffordshire Terrier (AST) and Welsh Terrier (WLT). There are also faint signals from other breeds which are not strong enough to identify.



Levels of Detection: WISDOM Panel MX detects the presence of different breeds at varying levels. The information below indicates the likelihood of you seeing traits from these breeds in Arthur Guinness.

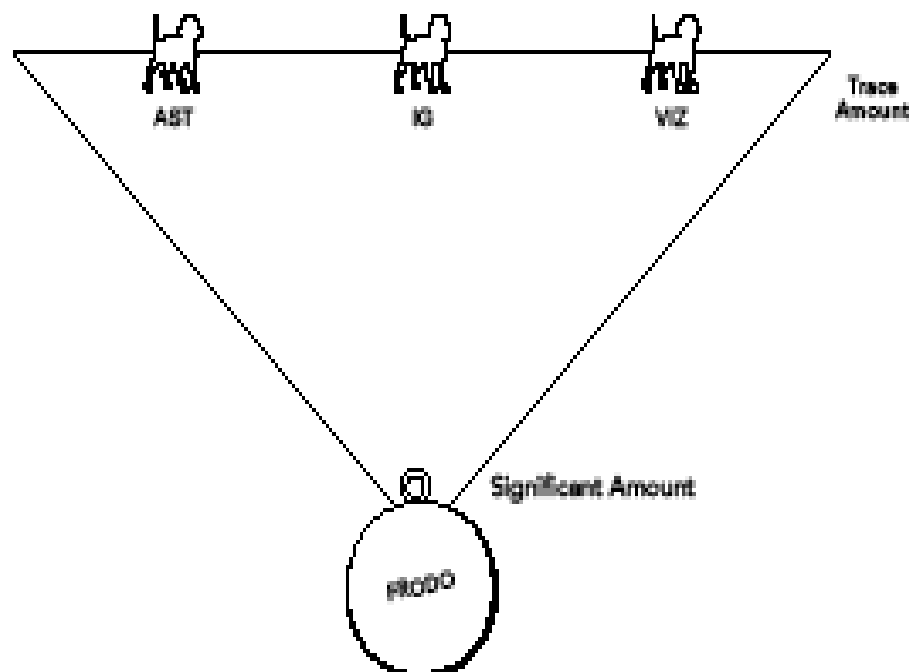
- You May see traits from Boxer.
- There is a Chance of seeing traits from American Staffordshire Terrier and Welsh Terrier.

Frodo



WHAT BREEDS MAKE UP FRODO?

Frodo is one of a kind, unlike any other dog in the world. Our analysis has shown that Frodo is an extremely complex mixed breed dog. Results like Frodo's are found in about 15% of mixed breed dogs in the U.S. Frodo's ancestry contains distant traces of American Staffordshire Terrier (AST), Italian Greyhound (IG) and Vizsla (VIZ). There are also faint signals from other breeds which are not strong enough to identify.



Levels of Detection: WISDOM Panel MX detects the presence of different breeds at varying levels. The information below indicates the likelihood of you seeing traits from these breeds in Frodo.

- There is a Chance of seeing traits from American Staffordshire Terrier, Italian Greyhound and Vizsla.

- Am Staff is the most frequently identified breed by DNA analysis in dogs called “pit bulls”
- However, in most cases it is not found in significant amounts
- In all but one, other breeds were detected
 - Other breeds (Vizsla, Gordon setter) are identified in moderate amounts
 - Many other breeds are identified in trace amounts





Schalke (2008) Dangerous Dog Legislation

- Subjects – 415 dogs and their owners
 - Am Staffs, Bull terriers, Pit bull type, Doberman, Rottweiler, Staffie bull
 - Control group 70 Golden Retrievers
- Results
 - 95% of dogs tested displayed adequate and appropriate behaviors
 - 5% dogs showed aggressive behavior in inappropriate situations. **There were no breed differences.**
 - A dog can be dangerous or a nuisance no matter the breed
 - Counteract with good upbringing and keeping of dogs
 - Educate dog owners on responsible dog ownership



Breed Identification

- It is inappropriate to label dogs/cats with a specific breed when the information is likely not accurate and may hinder adoptability
- Animals of unknown ancestry must be identified in general terms ('DSH' or 'American Shelter Dog')
- Best method to match prospective adopter to new pet --- VIA BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

Viewpoint: Breed labeling dogs of unknown origin

It is impossible to breed label dogs of unknown history and genetics solely on the basis of their appearance. There is so much behavioral variability within each breed, and even more within breed mixes, that we cannot reliably predict a dog's behavior or his suitability for a particular adopter based on breed alone. Each dog is an individual.

We must take the lead and free ourselves from stereotypes that imply simple solutions to complex issues, in order to better serve our animals and society.



Amy Marder, VMD CAAB
Animal Rescue League of
Boston



Bernice Clifford, CPDT
Animal Farm Foundation



I'M AN AMERICAN SHELTER DOG!

The staff here has taken their best guess at my breed, but often size and color are not the best indicator of my actual background. One thing they can tell you is that I'm a very special mix of dogs! Through our ARL series of behavioral tests, the staff can tell a lot about my unique personality!

If my adopters are curious about my breed, they will be happy to know that Boston Veterinary Care at the Animal Rescue League of Boston offers DNA testing for mixed breed dogs like me. This is a blood test called the "Wisdom Panel." To find out more information on this please speak to a staff member.

No matter what my breed background is, my personality speaks for itself! Knowing my true genetic make up won't change who I am. If you are interested in adopting a prestigious American Shelter Dog, please ask the staff to visit with me!



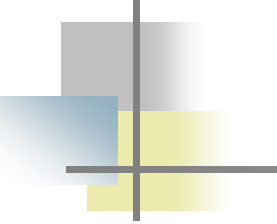
Maintain Behavioral Health via Provision of:

- Vaccination upon intake to shelter
- Nutrition
- Fresh water
- Physical examination (to rule out medical problems which may cause stress)
- Comfortable and quiet sleeping/resting area
- Regular walks outside to eliminate
- Physical and mental stimulation



Best Method to Maintain Medical and Behavioral Health???

- Treat and prevent problems
- Find them a home ASAP
 - Make sure shelter is a hospitable/friendly place to visit
 - Increase traffic to shelter, or shelter to 'traffic'
- Post-adoption follow-up!
 - Online surveys (www.surveymonkey.com, www.cbarq.org)







Starting a Behavior Program...Recommendations

- Personnel
 - Behaviorist (or consultant)
 - Volunteer coordinator
 - Volunteers
- Plans/Protocols
- Equipment/Housing
- Pre-existing Foundation Behavior Program
- **If you don't have these resources... utilize your community!**
 - Rescue groups, etc.



Foundation Behavior Program

- Daily exercise (dogs AND cats)
- Bed/Toys/Mental stimulation
- Social interaction
- People who interact with pets must learn basic behavior modification techniques

Impulse Control Exercises

- Teaches dog to listen to owner, even when excited





In-Kennel/Adoption Assessment

- Evaluator **MUST** be someone unknown to the dog
- Observe dog's behavior in kennel
 - Unknown man, woman, child walking by cage
 - Dog walking by cage
 - Barking, repetitive behaviors?
- Sit in an adoption visitation room with the dog



Evaluating Behavior Problems: Is This TREATABLE???

- Predictability
- Potential to cause damage
- Characteristics of adopter's lifestyle (or potential adopters)
- Overall complexity of problem



Treating the Problem

- Train ALL staff about the goals/details of the program
- Training should start with staff, and THEN volunteers
- Hands-on training for volunteers/trainers



Liability

- Shelters can be held liable for aggressive behavior which occurs after adoption
 - Known Dangerous or Vicious dogs
 - Dogs which show evidence of aggressive tendencies
- Limit liability risks by providing full disclosure at time of adoption

Aggression is a form of communication...





Behavior Problem Categorization

Treatable - Rehabilitatable

- Jumping up?
- Pulling on leash?
- Barking?
- Food bowl aggression?
- Destructive behavior?

Treatable - Manageable

- Aggression toward cats
- Aggression (growls) toward children
- Separation Anxiety



Treating the Treatable

Is this Treatable?

"Sonya"



Is this Treatable?

"Addie"



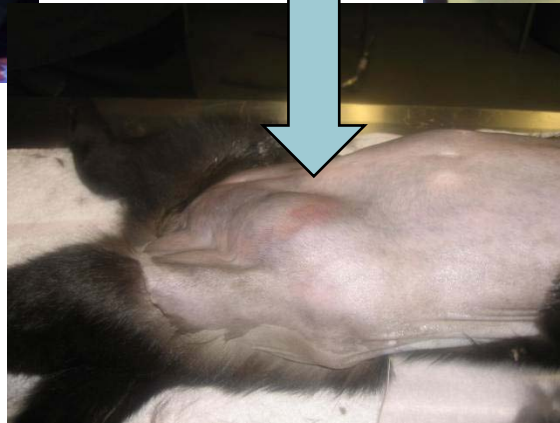
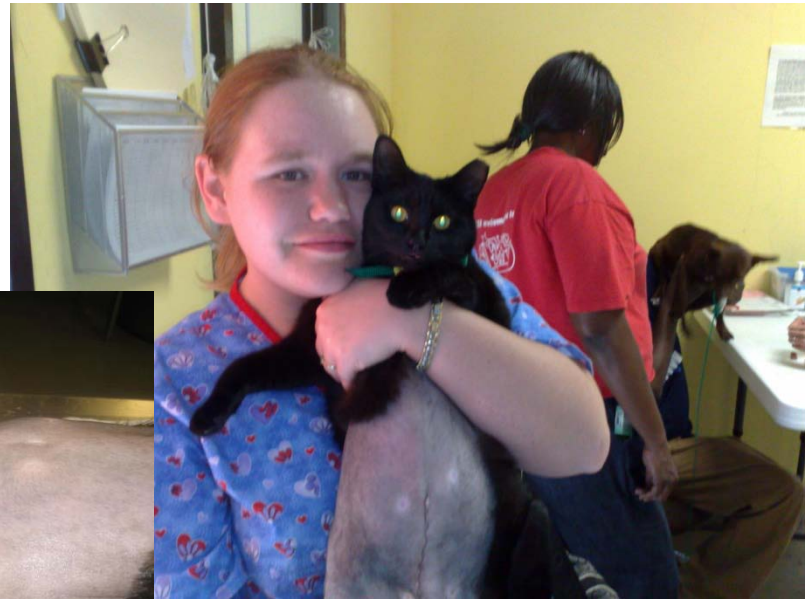
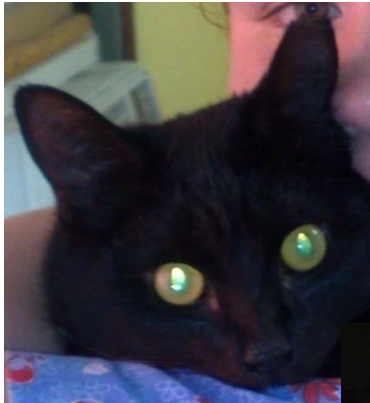
Is this Treatable?

"Abner"



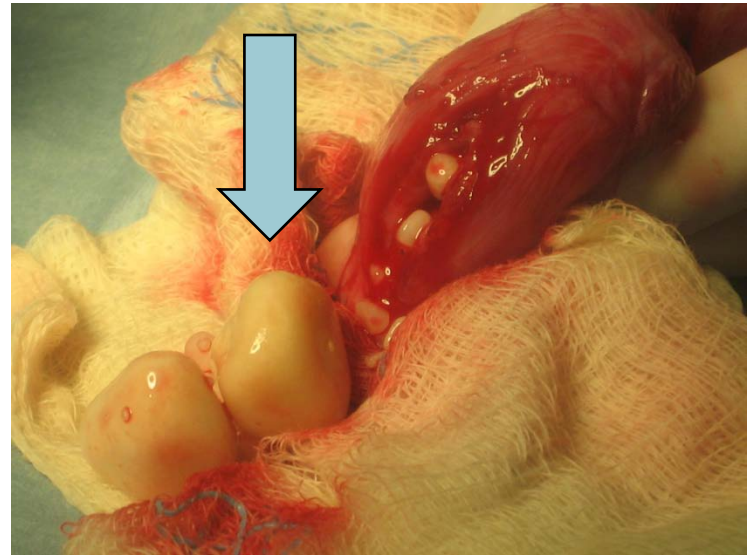
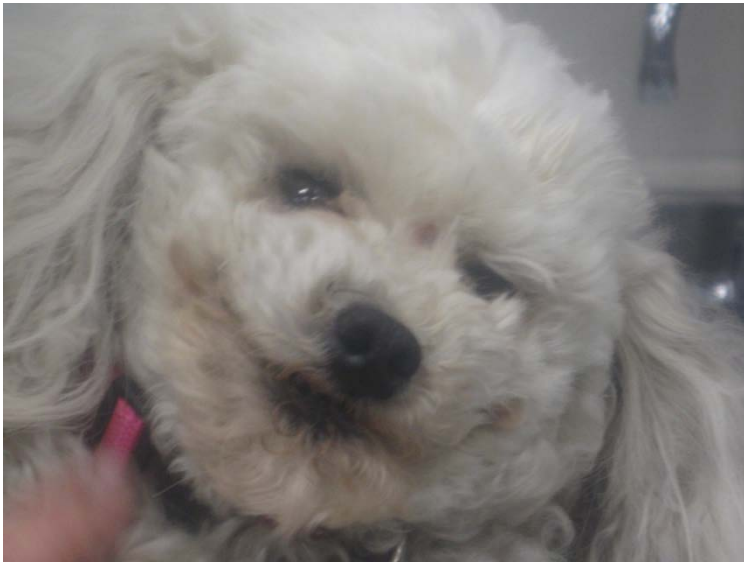
Is this Treatable?

"Little Bit"



Is this Treatable?

"Mattie"



Is this Treatable?

- Most wounds aren't as bad as they first appear...



"Red"

Is this Treatable?

- “Red” after clipping and cleaning, antibiotics, and two days of healing
- Surgery was done to complete closure





Avoid Miscategorizations

- How would you categorize the following problems?
 - Blindness
 - 14 year old dog, thin and limping left hind leg
 - Pregnant cat



In Summary...

- Implement Daily Shelter Rounds
- Develop Preventative Health Programs
- Develop a Foster Network
- Establish Relationships with Veterinarians and Rescue Groups
- Avoid breed labels unless confident of accuracy
- Treat the treatable!