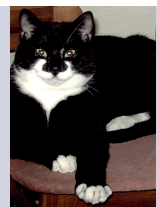




YOUR CAT CAN BE A HERO - BECOME A TISSUE DONOR



SATAN LIVES ON

For Vera and Peter Tinson of Luton in Bedfordshire, the loss of their 12 year-old cat, Satan, was eased by the ability to donate his bone and soft tissue to Veterinary Tissue Bank's donor scheme.

Although Vera was devastated when Satan was diagnosed with heart problems, she was realistic about his prognosis and when she discovered he had died in his favourite place - the greenhouse in which he had been born - she immediately bequeathed his body to Veterinary Tissue Bank and arranged the logistics with her local veterinary practice. It's hard at such times to think about how this loss might help other animals, but in some cases the knowledge that a beloved cat's departure has actually been able to help other cats find a new lease of life can make the grief more bearable.

This was the case for Vera who took great comfort from the fact that Satan was able to go on to help other cats in need. As a human donor herself, Vera is pragmatic about end of life issues and is keen to help those that are left behind. She said: "It is a great gift to help the living after your death. I am

pleased Satan has been able to do this. After the tissue and bone had been processed, his remains were individually cremated by an approved pet crematorium and were returned to us in a lovely casket. He was treated with respect and dignity throughout the entire process." Vera commented: "Satan was a great character who enjoyed his life to the full. His sister, Angel is still with us and although I naturally hope she will be with us for a lot longer yet, I fully intend to sign her up as a donor too."

Dr. Peter Myint from Veterinary tissue bank said "Transplants from cats are always in short supply and we are very grateful to Vera for thinking of helping other cats in need. This single donation will help 45 cats secure a new lease of life through life-saving surgical procedures."

Cats, unlike their dog cousins, are less likely to be vaccinated and therefore not eligible for

tissue donation where full vaccination history and certain medical criteria need to be met. Cat owners can raise the tissue donation with their vets when the time comes or they can register their pets with VTB in advance via the website. They will then receive a Pet Donor Card which helps to facilitate the donation process at the end of life stage.

The tissue bank is desperately short of cat donors and is hoping that owners will respond positively by registering their pet cats as donors so that when they finally pass they can go on to help gift life to other cats. This will enable specialist veterinary practices around the UK to access processed tissues, bone, tendon and ligament, which are often needed in orthopaedic surgery to repair injuries such as fractures and ligament ruptures.

To register your cat, visit our website www.vtbank.org.

NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR DOGS WITH CHRONIC ARTHRITIS

Stem cell therapy is helping to alleviate the pain of chronic arthritis for many dogs around the UK. Stem cell therapy acts fast so your pet feels the benefits quickly.

The simple procedure involves harvesting cells from the patient by removing a small fat sample from under the skin of the host pet in a small surgical procedure- the sample is then

transported to Veterinary Tissue Bank where the stem cells are isolated and expanded in cell culture and then returned for injection by the veterinary surgeon into the patient's injured tissue or joint. The remaining cells are stored frozen at the Tissue Bank for future use.

The cells used are autogenous (from the same patient) and because the pet's own cells

are used, there is no risk of rejection. It still a relatively new procedure but is becoming increasingly well known throughout the country with many vets opting for this treatment.

If you are a dog owner and would like to find out more about stem cell therapy please contact us and we will be happy to explain more about the treatment.

Pippin- a 13 year-old miniature Poodle with chronic osteoarthritis from Aylesbury - found relief from his pain following stem cell therapy.



His owner, Mavourneen Elliot, had become increasingly desperate to find some reprieve from the pain for Pippin, her lifelong companion who sadly also suffers from Cushing's and thyroid issues, making it difficult for him to take traditional pain killers.

Veterinary surgeon, Luke Cottis, suggested stem cell therapy to Mavourneen as a way of alleviating the pain for Pippin. Luke Cottis explains: "It is a straight-forward procedure; Pippin was only in hospital for a couple of hours while we injected the cells then he was able to return home. I am delighted with the improvement."

Mavourneen commented:

"The procedure was like a miracle; Pippin went in limping and scarcely able to move his front leg in particular but after the procedure, over the following week, he got progressively stronger and more comfortable. He was able to return to walks that he hadn't been able to do for the last year. In fact, I had previously bought him a buggy so that he could still get out even when he was really stiff and I took it with me on one of his early walks, just in case, but when I indicated to him to get in it, he refused point blank and trotted off, as if to say: 'you've got to be joking.' The difference in him is amazing; you wouldn't believe he was the same dog."

Nick - a year old Labrador with chronic osteoarthritis from Aberdeen - is one of the first dogs from the Aberdeen Veterinary Referrals (AVR) to benefit from pioneering stem cell therapy.



Donna Sangster, who works as a receptionist at AVR, took Nick on at just eight weeks old when he was brought in by his breeder with a broken leg. The breeder said he was unable to pay for the repair to the leg, so Donna took the youngster on and paid for his treatments. She said: "Nick had an external fixator fitted and recovered quickly from that as puppies do, and by the time he was five months old he was running about like any other puppy.

"However, at six months old, I noticed that he was limping slightly when out running so took him in to work for Scott to check. Following a CT scan and arthroscopy, it was confirmed he had medial coronoid disease and he had a fragment removed from his left elbow. "After another period of cage rest, he was back running around but was getting occasionally lame again and holding his leg up."

As Nick was now a year old, the team decided to do another CT scan to check how the bones were now that

he was fully grown, and were suspicious of another crack in the medial coronoid, so another arthroscopy was carried out. Donna takes up the story: "Unfortunately this showed his elbow dysplasia had progressed and the surface of the inside of his elbow joint was being worn away (medial compartment syndrome). This happens due to his elbow not fitting snugly together, causing uneven loading of the cartilage within the joint. "Options for treatment included surgeries to shift his weight to the outside of the joint, a partial elbow replacement or stem cell therapy. As this option is of minimal invasiveness, and he is quite small for the implants available for a partial elbow replacement, we chose stem cells for Nick in the first instance."

Having done a few of the procedures before with good results, they were aware of this ground breaking process of stem cell therapy. Scott Rigg, BVMS CertSAS MRCVS, orthopaedic surgeon at AVR, commented:

"Nick's lameness improved rapidly after his first injection. However, around eight weeks later a second episode of lameness occurred which again has improved rapidly after the second injection. Our experience is that after a second injection lameness resolution tends to persist for a much longer period of time- typically 6-12 months.

We do not fully understand how these injections are helping our patients, however, provided the owners give informed consent, after seeing the results (reduced pain and lameness scores) in our patients we are happy to be offering this treatment."

Donna concluded: "He had his first injection before Christmas and has been doing really well since then. His lameness is much improved and he loves nothing more than to run round the woods at full speed. He still has a very small amount of lameness if he has been running particularly hard but he is able to be a real dog again, which is fantastic."



Thomas - an 11 year-old Labrador with chronic osteoarthritis from Preston has also benefitted from stem cell therapy



Unfortunately, because Thomas was intolerant to all the usual pain relief medications, his options were limited and his owner, Ann Tomlinson turned to her vet, Chris Manning of Hillcrest Animal Hospital in Chorley to find a solution. He was aware of stem cell therapy and suggested the treatment for Thomas.

Thomas had undergone two cruciate operations over the years and had a very poor knee joint which, although

still enlarged, is giving him considerably less discomfort. The simple injections were an ideal solution for Thomas and Ann was delighted with the results.

Ann commented: "He seems a lot more comfortable since his surgery, there is certainly a marked improvement in him. I take him to hydrotherapy twice a week and he also has the supplement, Yumove Advance and I am just hoping that this will give him a good quality of life."