

Suffield Veterinary Hospital April 2018 Patient of the Month

Meet Charlie, a charming bunny owned by the Paquette family of Feeding Hills, MA. This Easter-inspired picture was taken by Maria Vickers of InSpire Me Photo of West Springfield. So cute! Deb Paquette tells Charlie's story:

"Charlie joined our family 2 1/2 years ago. We were told this tiny little peanut's breed was unknown. All they knew was that he is half Holland Lop. As he grew, it was obvious he was "half Lop" when only one ear flopped down! He is a completely indoor (potty trained) bunny who is spoiled by every member of our household! He loves to play chase with my daughters Emily (9) and Kaelynn (7), lay with them as they play and he snuggles on the couch when they are watching TV. He LOVES to tease his Boxer brother by lying perfectly in front of the gate so only his hind legs and tail are visible!"

On Sunday February 11, I noticed that Charlie still had a full bowl of food and his potty was not as full as it normally is. He didn't really want to hop around but rather chose to lay under the couch. Monday morning I called Dr. Sabellico for advice. As always, the compassionate staff got Mr. Charlie in that same day. My oldest daughter was very nervous about leaving him and his condition, but the amazing staff reassured her that Charlie would be very comfy and content until he could be picked up. They showed her the cage he would be staying in and introduced us to the other animals there. I am so grateful that my family, both two- and four-legged, have such an amazing hospital to care for them."

Dr. Sabellico diagnosed a condition called Gastrointestinal Hypomotility, a medical term for the slow down of food passing through the digestive tract. Rabbits digest their food similar to horses and need to eat high fiber foods like good quality hay continuously throughout the day. This results in normal gut motility and proper digestion. When the gut slows down or stops food accumulates in the stomach and leads to pain, dehydration and a disruption of the normal bacterial flora in the G. I. tract. Rabbits cannot vomit like other animals so without prompt treatment this can be a fatal condition. Charlie's family recognized that he was not eating or passing feces so treatment was started early which saved his life.

For showing everyone what great family house pets rabbits make, and for charming all of us at Suffield Veterinary Hospital, we are pleased to name Charlie the April 2018 Suffield Veterinary Hospital Patient of the Month.



Suffield Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Ann Huntington ❖ Dr. Anita Sabellico

Dr. Dawn Burke ❖ Dr. Daniel Rothbart

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