

Suffield Veterinary Hospital February 2010 Patient and Owner of the Month

Meet cute little M&M, a blue parakeet owned by the Steenhards of Enfield. M&M became part of the family several years ago, and is very endearing and affectionate.

Parakeets or, as they are more correctly known, budgerigars, come in several colors, with blue and green being most common. They are great singers, and fun companions. Though there are many birds that are better talkers, some budgies pick up a few words. It is usually possible to tell male from female by the color of the skin above the beak, but not always!

For years, the Steenhards knew M&M as a male, always talking about "him" or "his" toys, etc. That changed this past September when he became seriously ill with constipation. They brought him to our Dr. Anita Sabellico, one of the few veterinarians in the region with the knowledge, skill and experience to treat a wide variety of bird species.



The physical examination revealed a hard mass in the lower abdomen. An Xray confirmed Dr. Sabellico's suspicion about M&M: "he" was having difficulty laying an egg! Being egg-bound is an often fatal disorder of birds of many species, and M&M was already critically ill. She was treated with

supplements by stomach tube, then put under anesthesia to deliver the egg. When she didn't bounce back to health, she remained in our avian ICU for two more days and underwent a second surgery to treat some damaged parts of her uterus. While at Suffield Veterinary Hospital she needed to be fed by stomach tube, but as she became brighter Dr. Sabellico sent her home, hoping that she would start eating in familiar surroundings.

Reports from the home front were exciting. M&M's appetite returned as soon as she was able to again sit at the table and eat some peaches and strawberries with her family.

In the photo here taken by the portrait experts at MotoPhoto in Enfield, here is M&M. And if you look carefully, you can see the egg that nearly took her life, and that changed the way the Steenhards thought about him...er...her forever!

For being a very courageous little bird that survived an unexpected critical disorder, we are pleased to call M&M our February 2010 Suffield Veterinary Hospital Patient of the Month.

Suffield Veterinary Hospital

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