

Suffield Veterinary Hospital February 2018 Patient of the Month

Meet Stella, a 7-year-old Shih Tzu mix dog owned and loved by Carol Delfavero of Windsor Locks, shown here in a photograph by our veterinary technician, Jen Haire. As Carol explains it:

"Stella was adopted one week after I had to have my beloved Louie put down. I didn't think he could be replaced, but when she was brought to me shaking and afraid, my heart melted. Stella's elderly owner had died just a few days before she was brought to me by his daughter who had heard I'd lost Louie. Louie could never be replaced, but now I had a new companion and friend. Stella is a happy, generally friendly little girl that is one of the dearest dogs I have ever had. She is very strong willed and has to be made to think obeying is her own idea. She can be a fussy eater and will leave her food in the dish all day and not touch it. On the other hand she adores raw cauliflower, green beans and broccoli and fresh or, especially, frozen peas. Usually she is not one to eat things she shouldn't, so I have no idea how or why she ingested the ornament."

It is that ornament's hook that opens our most recent adventure with Stella. She was brought to Suffield Veterinary Hospital in December unable to keep anything down and generally feeling poorly. After an examination, Dr. Burke took X-rays of her abdomen and saw the looped piece of wire that springs open inside an ornament to attach a hook to, lodged just where the stomach joins the small intestine. While an easy option would be to just operate on Stella to remove the wire, Dr. Burke realized that there might be a better way, and suggested a specialist at VCA Boston Road Animal Hospital in Springfield who might be able to remove the wire using an endoscope. Because the wire is so sharp, the specialists were concerned that the wire might have already perforated her bowel, but luckily were able to retrieve it safely, and Stella bounced right back to normal.

Again, as told by her owner, "Stella is herself again. She doesn't mind the cold and enjoys romping in the snow. Shredding paper is her only destructive behavior. She loves climbing on to the back of furniture and on to the top of the back seat of the car. She is a great watchdog and is very protective of me. I feel so fortunate that Dr. Burke and staff directed me to the help I needed to save her from what could have been a disastrous outcome."

For serving as a reminder that even the least likely dogs can swallow unexpected items, we are happy to name Stella the February 2018 Suffield Veterinary Patient of the Month.



The culprit.

Suffield Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Ann Huntington ❖ Dr. Anita Sabellico ❖ Dr. Dawn Burke

❖ Dr. Griffin O'Connor ❖ Dr. Daniel Rothbart

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