



## "Orion" - Diabetic Cat with Broken Leg



Orion's X-ray

Trying to create an environment in which healing can take place is a concept with which most of this column's readers should be familiar. Whilst this is a fairly simplistic approach it can be very difficult to achieve when other adverse factors can play a significant part.

The older a patient is the slower the healing process. Being overweight is never helpful in the healing equation. Throw in a metabolic disorder like diabetes and you are writing a recipe for potential disaster. Consequently, when Orion a rather large, old diabetic cat presented with a broken leg I was not brimming with confidence. Especially when there appeared to be no known history of trauma to account for the initial break.

The spectre of bone cancer loomed. Despite all these misgivings Orion's owners, as ever, were keen to give him every opportunity to recover. Apart from taking a biopsy from the affected area to eliminate the diagnosis of bone cancer the surgical repair using external and internal stainless steel pins is identical no matter the age and condition of the patient. The unknown factor is the patient's ability to repair the fracture if we can provide a reasonable environment for that process to occur.

Had cancer been present healing would never have occurred no matter what we did. Fortunately for Orion that was one factor in his favour.....no cancer! Eight weeks later and Orion's ability to recuperate is great testimony to him and his owners. The fracture is well on course to complete recovery. So now it's back to worrying about his diabetes!

Terry Dunne BVMS, Cert SAO, MRCVS