



## Interesting Case from our web site [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)



### "Bruce" - Terrier in RTA ( Road Traffic Accident )



Bruce

At the end of January a young terrier called Bruce was brought in as an emergency because he had been in a road traffic accident. He was bleeding badly and most of the skin of his right front leg and toes had gone. On top of this the hock of his left hind leg was dislocated.

Bruce was admitted straight away to assess the situation. X-rays were taken of both his legs and these fortunately showed no fractures.

After contacting the owner, discussing the costs and months long healing process, treatment was started.

#### Golden Period

The early time after a wound is called "the golden period" – an interval of about 6 hours during which prophylactic antibiotics are effective.

For proper care it was necessary to anaesthetise Bruce. The area was prepared for surgery, and the wound was thoroughly irrigated with large amounts of sterile saline to remove all the foreign particles like dirt, hair and clotted blood. The wound was debrided ( dead, devitalized and contaminated tissue removed ) and the wound edges were closed with sutures.

Wound healing is basically divided in 3 overlapping series of events:

- 1) Inflammation
- 2) New tissue formation
- 3) Scarring and remodelling.

A clean incised wound begins to heal by 5-8 days. The cells of the top layer of the skin (the epidermis) multiply and the connective tissue and other layers of the skin fill up the area underneath.

In Bruce's case his young age and general good health would enhance or hasten wound healing. However other factors like infection, devitalisation, dead space, and movement of the wound could delay the wound healing.

This is what happened in the first week, despite our good efforts the wound became infected, and copious amount of pus started to ooze from the wound. Bruce had to be sedated and the devitalised tissue had to be removed. This meant that there was not enough skin to close the wound and it had to heal by secondary wound healing.

New tissue in the form of granulation tissue appears in open wounds in 3 to 6 days, and will slowly get smaller by wound contraction.

Putting two screws on either side of the joint and connecting these with a loop of suture material making an artificial ligament remedied the damage in his hock.

Bruce needed to have bandages to protect the wound for 5 weeks to allow proper healing, and finally after removing the screws from his joint we can say he made a great recovery after 2 months of intensive treatment.

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Leg before surgery



Leg after healing

This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)

***You won't care how much we know - until you know how much we care***