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"Poppet" - Road Traffic Accident



A witness to the road traffic accident saw the poor dog being pushed along the ground by the car's tyres so that afterwards the dog's hairs could be seen sticking out of the tarmac. What must have been shocking to watch must have been all the more shocking to experience if "Poppet's" injuries were anything to go by.

"Poppet" Draycott, a young English Springer Spaniel was rushed to the surgery on Leicester Road immediately after the incident by her very distressed owner. Masking my own concerns over her injuries "Poppet" was admitted for emergency treatment.

The skin from her right hind leg had been peeled off from her thigh as if she had removed it as a stocking. To make matters worse she had dislocated her right hip for good measure. Early intervention is paramount with these horrific injuries and we quickly set about transfusing "Poppet" with fluids, antibiotics and painkillers.

Once the patient was heavily sedated I managed to replace the dislocated hip with a great deal of physical effort. That "clunk" as the hip bone returns to its normal location within the socket is always a great relief.

Secondly, the nursing team set about removing the "road remnants" from the heavily contaminated wound. Many litres of saline are used to flush the debris from the surgical site as well as fine tweezers for the larger fragments. Once clean I set about trying to reattach the "stocking" of skin to her leg.

Finally, when her leg resembled a patchwork quilt a special drain had to be sewn into position to prevent the accumulation of fluid that would delay the healing process. After that it was down to "Poppet".

I needn't have worried; within a week we were able to remove the drain, by 2 weeks all the sutures had been removed and within 4 weeks the remaining patches of skin that we had been unable to close surgically had healed over. A remarkable recovery by any standards. Additionally, with the owners close supervision in restricting her to short frequent lead exercise her dislocated hip is but a distant memory. I am unsure as to how quickly the memory of her accident will be erased from the minds of those that witnessed it!

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This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at www.fairfield-vets.co.uk

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