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"Suki" - Shih Tzu puppy with Stenotic Nares



When Mr and Mrs Kelsall brought their brand new 8 week old Shih Tzu puppy called "Suki" to see me for the first time they were somewhat taken aback by one of my suggestions..... to take her back for a refund! However, as is often the case, owners become bonded very quickly to a new pup especially one like "Suki" with such an appealing personality.

My responsibility in these situations is to make new owners completely aware of any health problems that their pup might have and the financial and emotive commitments that this might involve. Once owners know honestly what those problems might entail they are then in a position to make an informed choice.

If, after due consideration, they decide to tackle those problems my team and I will ensure they receive every assistance we can offer.

"Suki's" health problem was clearly audible as well as visible! She had the worst case of collapsed nostrils or stenotic nares that I have ever seen or heard!

Brachycephalic or flat faced breeds of dog are characterised by having a compressed face with poorly developed nostrils and distorted upper airways. These anatomic exaggerations lead to increased respiratory effort causing snoring, mouth breathing and exercise intolerance.

"Suki" was without doubt the loudest snorer for her size I have ever heard. The nose cartilages lack normal rigidity and will easily collapse on inspiration, not unlike sucking up a drink through a damp paper straw. After some discussion we elected to schedule "Suki" for a "nose job" when she was 6 months old in an effort to open up her airways. This procedure involves a degree of plastic surgery in an effort to widen the nostrils thereby improving airflow.

Within 10 days of surgery "Suki" has had her sutures removed and is able to feel the benefits of her beautiful new nose. Her owners are also able to hear the benefits of a much less noisy companion!

Terry Dunne BVMS, Cert SAO, MRCVS

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

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