

Dog Undergoes Cutting-Edge Laparoscopy

The ASPCA Bergh Memorial Animal Hospital offers dogs an alternative to major surgery.

Posted: March 7, 2008, 5 a.m. EST

During a summer vacation in the Hamptons with his owners Ricky Riva and Nanjoo Joung, Whisky, a Standard Poodle, fell ill and was temporarily hospitalized with chronic liver disease.

Although veterinarians in other hospitals recommended surgery, Whisky's owners consulted Dr. Louise Murray, the Director of Medicine at the ASPCA Bergh Memorial Hospital. She suggested a laparoscopy, a much less aggressive approach to examine the severity of the dog's illness.

"Although laparoscopy is a common procedure for humans, it is still relatively new in the field of veterinary medicine," McMurray said. "It is a significant development because it's minimally invasive and doesn't require patients to stay overnight in recovery."

On January 10, 2008, the ailing dog underwent the laparoscopy, the first to be held at the New York hospital. It involved inserting two tubes into the dog's abdomen. In one tube, a tiny camera was inserted so doctors could observe Whisky's internal organs, including his liver. In the other tube, Dr. Murray took a small sample of the liver for a biopsy. After the tubes were removed and the small incisions closed, Whisky recovered and left the hospital with no pain or discomfort.

Days later, they received the good news: The results of the biopsy indicated that the dog had a mild inflammatory condition of the liver treatable with medication.

For Ed Sayres, ASPCA President and CEO, the procedure was as much a success for the hospital as it was for Whisky. "I am extremely proud that we are able to offer our patients the latest advances in veterinary medicine for their health and well-being," said Sayres.