



Interesting Case from our web site www.fairfield-vets.co.uk



"Bonnie" - Crossbreed with Idiopathic Vestibular Syndrome



Bonnie

Bonnie, a 15 year old crossbreed dog had been living a full and happy life despite her years. Then very suddenly she lost her balance, struggling to stand up properly and falling over. She vomited a number of times and adopted a peculiar head tilt to her right hand side.

Her owners were very concerned that she had experienced a stroke and brought her down to the Fairfield Veterinary Centre to see me.

Examination of "Bonnie's" eyes demonstrated involuntary jerking of the eyeballs (nystagmus). Despite Mr Weedon's concerns these symptoms all point to a specific syndrome that we see fairly regularly called "idiopathic vestibular syndrome"

Since the symptoms are so specific we know exactly the area that is damaged but thus far no-one has established how that damage or injury occurs.

The inner ear contains a number of very sensitive structures (utricle, saccule and semicircular canals) which, through a variety of coordinated nerve impulses, allow us to maintain our balance and head position. Clearly something must affect these structures adversely to produce "Bonnie's" symptoms.

The most common adverse factor to affect the vestibular apparatus in humans is alcohol.....so I am told!

A more comparable condition in humans is vestibular neuritis where the symptoms are identical but where the causative factor is believed to be a virus.

The good news for "Bonnie" and her owners is that nearly all canine patients will go on to make a good recovery although some may be left with a slight head tilt (providing she stays off the booze!)

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