

Real personality

This little guy is a mixed breed with some terrier in him. He is not too big and is great with children. Pets can add a great deal to almost anyone's life and, as a matter of fact, studies show that children who have pets are healthier and older people who keep animals live longer. This dog is available for adoption at the Hoke County Animal Shelter. Representatives of the Hoke County Humane Society are on duty five days a week at the shelter.



What eyes

This tan Cocker Spaniel is less than one year old and is very friendly, says an attendant at the Hoke animal shelter. He needs a good home where he can find plenty of people to play with.

Disk problem may be serious for Dachshund

DEAR DOCTOR: My veterinarian has diagnosed our Dachshund as having a disk problem. He is painful over his back and is reluctant to jump up on furniture or go up our stairs. Is this likely to get worse?

ANSWER: It is impossible to know for sure if your pet will have more serious problems than it already showing.

The disks that act as cushions between the bones of the spine sometimes do degenerate and become calcified. When this happens, the center of the disk is forced out of the disk space and up against the spinal cord.

The disk material pinches the cord and the cord can't perform its normal function of transmitting nerve signals from the brain to the rest of the body.

In practical terms, this may either cause back pain and a reluctance to move or jump, or may be so serious as to cause the paralysis of the rear legs. Not all dogs with back pain will progress to paralysis, but they should be watched closely for worsening of the symptoms.

If your pet should become paralyzed because of disk disease, the methods of treatment may differ.

Many veterinarians will either do prompt surgery or refer you to a veterinary surgeon who does this type of surgery.

In a delicate operation, the spinal cord is opened at the site of the disk rupture and the disk material is removed. This allows the cords to resume its normal position and hopefully its normal function.

Results of the surgery depend on many factors such as how rapidly the disk rupture occurred, how soon the surgery was done after the rupture and how much injury the cord sustained at the time of the disk rupture.

It is important to keep your veterinarian informed as to your pet's progress. Rest and proper medication will be important parts of the treatment leading to your Dachshund's recovery.

Editor's Note: This column is provided as a service by the NORTH CAROLINA VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION. Do you have a question about pet care? If so, send it to "YOU AND YOUR PET", P.O. Box 887, Smithfield, N.C. 27577.



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