



McMASTER & HEAP VETERINARY PRACTICE

TINKER – THE SURVIVOR

There is never a dull moment at McMaster & Heap vets and funny enough the critical serious cases mostly show up on weekends, or 7pm at night. I'd arrived into work one Saturday to help out and Tinker was in our surgical area, having just been transferred

from the After Hours Clinic. He looked terrible (his face had taken the full impact of a collision with a car) but he was on a fentanyl drip and his pain seemed well managed. Miraculously he had survived and his success story is due to not just our

surgical efforts that Saturday but also the events that took place by many people prior to us seeing him.

His accident happened Friday night and some great human being saw him on the road and immediately delivered him to the After Hours clinic, which incidentally saved his life. We are so fortunate to have an emergency centre open through the nights and weekends when other clinics have closed. The team there

swiftly examined and stabilized Tinker and started him on pain medications, antibiotics and intravenous fluids. Then his owners were contacted as Tinker wore a collar with nametag attached. This means of identification (or a microchip) is so important because without an owners consent we can't really treat a critically ill patient to save its life. He was monitored and cared for all night until he was dropped off to us Saturday morning.

Even though it was a weekend with less staff rostered on, I knew Tinker couldn't wait until Monday for surgical repair. His lovely, worried owners wanted for us to do "everything" we could to ensure Tinker came home. That's where our outstanding team need

to be greatly commended, because regardless if any of them had plans that night, they all, without me asking, stayed late to ensure the best possible care and attention was given to a critically ill patient.

Tinker was anaesthetized, his skull was radiographed and I repaired his mandibular jaw fracture with wire and his hard palate injury. He had a massive gnash under his chin that required suturing and he had several broken teeth. A feeding tube was placed in his oesophagus to enable us and his owners to feed him post operatively. Cats with fractured jaws can take weeks to eat on their own. Steve was called in to assess his eyes as they were completely closed over and I wasn't sure whether he had retinal injuries, lens or corneal damage. Luckily Steve felt there was no ocular damage, just a lot of bruising and facial swelling.

Tinker was managed intensively over the coming week, his days spent with our hospital nurses and nights at the After Hours. He needed everything done for him from feeding six

times a day, loads of medications to be given, his face washed and he needed grooming as he couldn't do this for himself. His owners visited him daily and he really loved their visits. He was the perfect patient to treat – he was stoic, obliging and grateful.

Tinker was a FULL TEAM effort and I'm so pleased to report he's home now, lounging on beds, walking around his section, able to groom himself and even eating a little on his own. Steve and I couldn't do the job we do without the dedicated, caring staff we have.

A fantastic outcome and even though Tinker looks a little facially different now,

his owners report they have their "old" friend back.

Dr Michele McMaster



OPEN 7 DAYS
Cnr Hoon Hay & Coppell Place
Phone 338 2534, Fax 339 8624
E. mcmasterandheap@yahoo.co.nz
www.mcmasterheap.co.nz



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