

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CARE REVEALS 'HEART CONDITION' WAS RARE TUMOUR

Experts at a Yorkshire referral centre saved the life of a cocker spaniel with suspected heart problems after discovering she was actually suffering from a rare endocrine tumour.

Ten-year-old Poppy was referred to Paragon Veterinary Referrals, in Wakefield, with suspected high blood pressure and an irregular heartbeat, after she fell off the sofa and started to go lame.

Extensive tests were carried out including an ECG, heart scan, an abdominal ultrasound and CT scan, with the latter revealing a mass in her right adrenal gland.

Further investigation revealed it was a pheochromocytoma, a rare type of tumour which intermittently releases adrenaline and was causing the high blood pressure and abnormal heart rhythm.

Poppy was first seen by Debbie Hyman, advanced practitioner in veterinary cardiology at Paragon, which is part of Linnaeus.

She said: "The heart scan showed there was mild mitral valve regurgitation and mild borderline enlargement of left atrium (early stage B2 MMVD).

"The systolic function was slightly reduced, due to the hypertension, and diastolic function (delayed relaxation) was present.

"However, this case also highlighted that not all cardiac cases are obvious and straightforward as the abdominal scan and CT scan showed a mass in the right adrenal gland."

The tumour was now diagnosed as the probable cause of Poppy's problems and Paragon's head of surgery, small animal specialist Mickey Tivers, was called into action.

He said: "We were suspicious Poppy's high blood pressure and abnormal heart rhythm were due to the tumour intermittently releasing adrenaline.

"We operated to remove the tumour and the right adrenal gland. This was performed through an incision between her last two ribs, as this gave us the best access to the tumour.

"Poppy made a very good recovery from surgery and her blood pressure was decreased afterwards so we're confident we've successfully dealt with her problem."

Paragon's clinical director Sophie Adamantos said: "This case shows the importance of a multi-disciplinary centre such as Paragon, with experts in so many areas of the profession working together to great effect.

"We have the facilities and the expertise to manage and treat these more complex cases quickly and efficiently, all under one roof.

"Poppy's case highlights that not all apparent cardiac cases end up as just another cardiac case, as it was the tumour causing the symptoms, not the heart."

Delighted owner Janet Baker said: "We've had Poppy since she was an eight-week-old puppy and we're sure the skill and care shown by Debbie and Mickey have saved her life.

"She is now fully recovered, enjoying life to the full and we feel she will now enjoy many more years with us."

Paragon's multi-disciplinary care includes anaesthesia and analgesia, cardiology, dermatology, diagnostic imaging, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology, orthopaedics and soft tissue surgery.

For more information about Paragon Veterinary Referrals, visit www.paragonreferrals.co.uk.

ENDS