

We noticed Matilda was having trouble using her back legs on the 1st Feb 2007. By the 25th February she was unable to use her front or back legs and referred to Specialist Vet, Tony Black. Matilda was hospitalised and a spinal tap was performed. The diagnosis was Polyradiculoneuropathy and we were told that she would recover if we were prepared to devote time to her. Due to the state that Matilda was in I found this hard to believe and I asked him on several occasions if he thought this truly possible.

He referred us to Helen Nicholson on 15th March. We were not very optimistic as Matilda had deteriorated so much but after Helen's intervention we saw miracles happen on a daily basis. Matilda was incontinent and after only days of treatment she was able to let us know when she wanted to go to the toilet and carried outside.

Helen monitored her progress weekly and changed the exercises as the need arose. By the end of the second week we were overjoyed with little milestones that were occurring e.g. holding her head up when we put her down (previously her head would drop to the floor), lifting her legs slightly when we performed the "superman" exercise and when we put her down on the ground she anticipated and straightened her legs.

By the 30th March she was pushing herself up into a sitting position

2nd April able to stand on all legs with assistance.

5th April started walking very tentatively and went to the toilet without our help.

9th April sent Helen a video of our girl walking.

21st April – Matilda went down our external staircase but was unable to come up.

22nd April – Matilda went running up the street to see her friend "Pepe" and came up the external staircase.

It has been a dream come true and without Helen's help we believe that Matilda would never have recovered to the extent that she has. Helen's expertise, enthusiasm and encouragement got us through this terrible time and we followed her instructions without hesitation. Nothing is too much trouble for Helen and we keep in close contact between visits with emails.

We believe that nursing Matilda back to her old self has been the most rewarding thing we have ever done and we could not have done it alone.

Dee Barham and Ron Jubb