



# THE KODIAK TAILS

saving lives, one dog at a time



## A Long Road to a Delicate Surgery Saves Wallace

By the time Wallace set out on a 20-hour journey to Colorado from his Seattle hometown for life-saving surgery, the Bernese-mix puppy had run up more medical bills than most dogs do in a lifetime.

He'd had a string of blood transfusions, and stints in intensive care. At one point, his human parents had him on 15 different medications, at hourly intervals from 6 a.m. to midnight – and he still was sinking.

Wallace was born with a defect that caused much of his blood to bypass his liver's filtering function. That led to a host of severe health complications.

After maxing out her credit cards to keep Wallace going from crisis to crisis, owner Madelyn Bickhart knew she had to find a way to pay for a permanent fix or say goodbye to her beloved pet.

*- "I couldn't let him go without trying everything I possibly could. God put animals into our lives for a reason ... What are you willing to do when you're the only one who can do anything?" - Madelyn Bickhart*

Bickhart worked the phones and the Internet, reaching out to organizations and individuals who might assist. Fortunately, KodiakCare and partner Seattle Humane came to the rescue, helping to fund a road trip to Colorado State University's teaching hospital, where Wallace could receive the treatment he needed at a fraction of Seattle rates.

Dr. Catriona MacPhail, a professor of small-animal surgery at Colorado State, knew that saving Wallace would be "very difficult," she said. The goal was to tie down or otherwise close off a nearly inaccessible shunt, a passage that was misdirecting the blood.

Given Wallace's problematic anatomy, tying off the shunt altogether probably would have killed him, so the surgical team slipped a suture around it to partially close it off, diverting most of the blood flow back to the liver. "We were able to narrow it substantially while also not putting him in danger," Dr. MacPhail explained.

The results were dramatic. Within weeks, his body weight had almost doubled to 65 pounds, and his development into adulthood resumed after being halted. "He's been growing like crazy, eating like crazy," said Bickhart. "He's no longer on medication for the first time in his life. He's in the right direction to have a full life."

MacPhail said that even with only a partial fix to the blood vessel, dogs often do very well without additional interventions. "The liver has an amazing capacity to regenerate," she said. "Normal quality of life, normal life span and off-medications is the goal for next year."

Wallace's owner is thrilled to have her dog feeling like himself. "He has a larger-than-life personality. He's such a spunky little guy," Bickhart said. "It's been quite a year and we wouldn't have our dog without your help. We couldn't be more grateful."

## Upcoming Events



### Save the date for KodiakCare's Auction Bidding for Barks, September 11-17, 2023

KodiakCare's 2023 Auction is back and bigger than ever with more great items to score for yourself and your pup.

- Grab a raffle ticket for an Apple Watch & Air Pods. Only 100 tickets will be sold!
- Secure your month in our coveted KodiakCare calendar!
- Bid for good! As always 100% of funds raised will pay for life saving care for dogs.

### KodiakCare's Jog for the Dogs

Get the leashes ready! KodiakCare is jogging for the dogs!

Walk, jog or run at your own pace while helping dogs in need for [KodiakCare's first annual virtual 5k](#).



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