



THE KODIAK TAILS

saving lives, one dog at a time

For Adaptable Sassy, One Eye Is Enough. Birds Beware.



When it comes to handling changes and challenges, humans can take a lesson from their dogs, who in the interest of survival are known to modify everything from social behavior to the tone of their barks.

For Sassy, a 13-year-old terrier-chihuahua mix, losing an eye has turned out to be no big deal. “She’s sassier than ever,” said owner Tiffany Crall. “She doesn’t bump into anything. She does pretty good without the eye. She acts like it’s normal.”

Sassy’s ordeal began with a tiny cyst that developed over a period of months into a serious health problem. In time, the cyst got bigger and eventually became a large, reddish-black mass covering almost the entire outside surface of the eyeball. Although Sassy showed no obvious signs of pain, Crall figured the growth must have been uncomfortable, and it bled when bumped or scratched.

Crall visited other veterinarians before being referred to Harmony Vet Care in Tampa, Fla., near her hometown. By the time she arrived, she knew the eye would probably need to be surgically removed, though she wasn't sure how she would pay for it.

Sure enough, the vets examining Sassy prescribed an enucleation, total removal of the eyeball, a procedure most often used for glaucoma or severe trauma. Sassy's case was unusual because the mass turned out to be ocular melanoma, a cancer of the eye, leaving no doubt that the surgery was urgently needed. "It killed me," Crall said. "I couldn't believe that my dog might die."

- "I was stuck ... It was like, 'Oh My God, these people are really going to help me.' I'm glad I had hope. " - Tiffany Crall

As for payment, Crall "knew she was going to need financial assistance. That's why she came to us," explained Dr. Nichole Sherrill, one of Sassy's vets at Harmony, a low-cost facility that has a good record of arranging financial aid. "If we could give everything away for free, we would, but we need to keep the roof on."

For Crall, who works at a Florida racetrack, qualifying for assistance from KodiakCare came as a huge relief, she said. "I was stuck ... It was like, 'Oh My God, these people are really going to help me.' I'm glad I had hope."

Sassy's surgery went smoothly, and the pup was able to leave that same afternoon, with no overnight hospital stay needed. Her vets were pleased to find nothing lurking behind the eye and, as this form of cancer rarely spreads, Sassy's life needn't be cut short, said Sherrill. Small dogs like Sassy often live to the age of 16 or 17, she noted.

As for adapting to the handicap, Sherrill expects "not even much of an adjustment period," she said, speaking from experience as she also owns a one-eyed dog. "He was found on the street with one eye, and we know he had surgery based on the scar. He uses the doggie door and gets along with other dogs. He has no issues getting around at all."

The same goes for Sassy: Just eight days after her surgery, Crall removed the cone collar protecting the eye as it healed. Right away, Crall said, Sassy was back to chasing birds: "This dog, she is just something else."

Mutt Madness is Back and Bigger for 2023!



Mutt Madness is our fun-filled, free-to-enter, highly furry and cute canine version of March Madness! Dogs advance through 7 contests, winning prizes as they go.

Post a picture of your dog and invite friends and family to cast their votes for your pup. Every vote for your dog gets them closer to the top spot and raises \$1 for a KodiakCare dog and family in need! All proceeds from Mutt Madness fund life-saving care for dogs.

Check out this year's [prizes](#) and [sign up](#) today! All dogs that preregister receive 10 free votes. The first 100 dogs who sign up receive a KodiakCare Mutt Madness sticker, an Embrace Pet Insurance bandana and a Chewy dog toy.

We can't wait to see your champion dog in the game!

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