



THE KODIAK TAILS

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SAVING LIVES, ONE DOG AT A TIME

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Big Surgery Saves Tiny Covid Companion Dog

After her husband passed away during the pandemic last year, Linda Dang found a lifeline in Coco, an eight-pound Yorkshire terrier mix with an appetite for home cooking. Recently, Dang put a meal on the table, turned her back for a few minutes, and when she returned, as her daughter Nguyet tells it, "Coco was going to town on the dinner."

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That meal was almost Coco's last. A pork bone became lodged in the dog's esophagus, and when the veterinarians at Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston could not immediately remove it, the only life-saving option was emergency surgery. "Our immediate thought was there's no way we can afford this, we will have to put her down," Nguyet Dang said. "Then KodiakCare came through and saved Coco's life." KodiakCare funded \$2,000 of the surgery and Angell utilized \$1,000 of their financial aid program for the needed treatment.

"I can't tell you what it's done for my family," said Nguyet Dang, whose mother spent every day doting on her pet. "With the year we've had with Covid, we barely could see her. She's older and could only say hi through the window. Coco gave her the affection she needed."

Coco is recovering and, at just one and a half years old, has a bright future ahead. But it was a close call.

The veterinarians had to cut from the middle of her chest all the way down to her abdomen to remove the pork bone. They inserted a feeding tube so the esophagus could heal, and provided IVs, pain medication and TLC in the intensive care unit. "It's a big surgery for a little dog," said Dr. Victoria McKaba, a recently graduated vet who helped supervise Coco's treatment along with Dr. Ann Marie Greenleaf, chief of staff at Angell. "As Dr. Greenleaf said, eating a pork bone isn't a reason to die. Coco was the mother's lifeline through the pandemic. I can't imagine how scared she was when being told her dog had a very serious problem. She stayed positive and believed in Coco -- and we believed in Coco."

Coco and Linda Dang are as close as ever, going on frequent walks and beginning to play again as the pup recovers her strength and gets back to her 10-pound fighting weight. For McKaba, who graduated from veterinary school earlier this year, reuniting the pair was "a highlight of my career," she said. "This is a 'why we do what we do' moment."



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Together we can save lives, one dog at a time!



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