

May 19, 2020

Detective Bishop and all those involved,

After reviewing just a portion of the video of Echo's torture, I want to provide a detailed outline of Echo's case history that was previously unexplainable but now obviously and regrettably fit with abuse as seen in the video.

4/9/2019: Echo presented with pain in his hip area. He was diagnosed with a lumbar spinal injury so severe that he had decreased proprioception in his right rear leg. Blunt force trauma such as punching, kicking, or beating with a hard object over the lumbar spine would explain this type of injury. An injury like this could also be acquired by swinging a dog by the upper body while the lower body twists abnormally. Based on the video, any one of those things most likely explain the cause of Echo's injury. Jumping or falling from a significant height could also cause lumbar spinal pain.

10/8/2019: Echo presented with a swollen face around the eyes. The owner stated that their other dog "Sweet Pea" died mysteriously the day before. Echo was found to have a severe corneal ulcer (scratch) on the right eye and conjunctivitis with swelling of both eyes. At the time, it was thought that maybe the shampoo used to bathe the dog the night before may have irritated the eyes. It was an unlikely explanation as typically a topical reaction will occur immediately but accepted as no other explanation was discovered until now.

10/17/2019: Echo presented with a nose bleed and severe mental depression. He was in shock with pale mucous membranes and superficial wounds to the rear limbs. He also had bruising to the face, abdomen, and sternum with multiple abrasions in those areas. Echo was so lethargic he couldn't hold his head up. We started flow by oxygen therapy and steroids. Due to limited owner funds, we had to treat conservatively, but Echo required intensive care and it was unclear if he would survive the night. We pressed the owners about Echo's condition to find a cause. It was clear Echo endured significant trauma, but there was no history of Echo having been at risk for being hit by a car or falling from a significant height. Echo was not exposed to any known toxins according to the family. The cause of Echo's trauma remained a mystery at the time, but a beating similar to the one Echo received in the video would have, without a doubt, caused his clinical signs.

10/18/2019: Echo survived the night and was discharged on all oral medications. Instructions were given to have Echo on strict rest. He was to be leash walked to go outside to potty, but otherwise kept calm with no jumping, running, or horse play. Echo was not to get overheated or overexerted in any way.

10/19/2019: Echo was recovering from his near-death traumatic episode. While he was supposed to be laying around recovering, from a likely severe beating that we can now visualize based on this video footage, he was instead being brutally tortured. The video taken on this day shows a helpless, vulnerable, and very weak animal being tortured and abused. Echo likely did not have the strength to fight back due to the extent of his illness and injuries from the 10/17/2019 case.

10/30/2019: Echo presented with large fluid filled pockets over both shoulders with a small puncture wound over his back. These fluid pockets turned out to be extremely large abscesses that had to be lanced, drained, and have penrose drains placed through them. The cause of the small puncture wound that infected Echo with bacteria to cause this abscess, was again, unexplainable until now. Any type of stab wound or blow hard enough to break the skin would cause this type of injury.

12/5/2019: Echo presented with an injury to his mouth. Echo was found to have a broken right upper lateral incisor and his medial incisors were loose. He had a swollen lower lip and both of his lips suffered significant trauma and were bleeding. Blunt force trauma to the face was suspected but once again no explanation could be found. Echo's loose teeth had to be removed and his gum repaired with suture. The video footage gives us a clear picture of what happened to Echo's face. Any one of the type of blows Echo suffered in the video could have caused this type of injury.

12/12/2019: Echo presented with bruising and fur loss to the right side. A large area of alopecia was located on his right side with necrotic skin. The whole area was either burned off or sloughing off due to injury or exposure to a chemical. This type of injury was likely caused by a chemical burn of some type.

12/13/2019: Echo presented again for a soft swelling on his sternum that turned out to be edema. This was likely due to an injury to the chest. Based on the video, it is clear that Echo was most likely kicked in the chest.

After reviewing the clips of the video and the case notes related to Echo, I am mortified that we didn't see this case for what it is: severe unprovoked brutal abuse. Hindsight it always 20:20 and while we did frequently question Ms. Skyanne about possible causes for each of these circumstances, we always gave the benefit of the doubt and tried to make the clinical signs fit with an underlying disease that wasn't there after all. Ms. Skyanne was seeking answers just as much as we were and appeared to be truthful in her statements and expressed true concern and love for Echo. She was always willing to accept our recommendations within her economic limits.

Please follow up with me if you have further questions regarding Echo's veterinary care or case history. I am available by phone, email, or in person.

With deepest regrets that we all have to deal with the cruelty of this world,

Lacey Davis, DVM