



A Little Rehab, a lot of Therapy and Tons of LOVE!



Photo provided by Canine Rehabilitation and Conditioning Group.

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I first met Lady when she was 6-months old. She was a young Border Collie with neurological issues, which became apparent to her guardian, Marilyn, when she was three weeks old. Marilyn decided not to euthanize her, despite being unemployed and unable to do any diagnostic testing when she was born. It is my feeling Lady has an underdeveloped cerebellum, the balance and coordination control center, and at six-months old Lady was unable to sit up, roll over and stand on her own, with or without support.

Lady had significant nystagmus, rapid lateral eye movement, which affected her perception of a stable world. She tended to flail all four limbs with no coordinated effort, so Marilyn started hydrotherapy with her. In the water, Lady circled only to the left and was unable to focus on an object, such as a ball, but seemed to enjoy the freedom of movement in the water.

Milestones that have occurred over time (Lady just turned five) have included being able to sit up on her own and hold a sustained sit, to stand for brief periods and walk 50-100 feet without falling, as well as being able to lie on her chest, chase a ball—though not in a straight line—climb a step or onto the couch. In the rehabilitation clinic, Lady walks 30 minutes in the water-filled treadmill and swims 45 minutes in the big pool. She now also uses a quad cart from Doggon Wheels, which allows her to walk, although she needs help steering.

Another very interesting aspect of Lady's case is that every time she went into heat, her nystagmus improved—to the point it no longer

existed—and she would make significant functional gains, which the veterinarians are unable to explain. However, because of the improvement, Marilyn chose not to spade Lady.

Lady has received five cranial sacral sessions when she was about two years old. After those sessions, Lady was much calmer overall; therefore, she became more coordinated and again made functional leaps. Marilyn started acupuncture with her about a year and a half ago and again this helped her settle into her body, become calmer and be able to better control her movements.

Lady is a wonderful dog and has a good quality of life, thanks to her guardian Marilyn, who found purpose in caring for Lady at a time in her life when she was unemployed and depressed. Lady's situation has now given Marilyn a dream of creating a center for disabled dogs. 🐾

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