



## Interesting Case from our web site [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)



### "Ben" - Labrador with Laryngeal Paralysis



Ben

Ben had been having problems for some time over the cooler winter period. He could no longer exercise to the levels he had previously. He had a very loud respiratory noise and now more recently with the warmer weather he had been close to collapse.

Ben was diagnosed with a well recognised condition known as "laryngeal paralysis". This peculiar disorder recognised in dogs and horses affects the "gateway" to the respiratory tract causing a failure of the cartilage and vocal folds to open up whilst breathing in.

Effectively acting to obstruct the airways it becomes clear why Ben was having great difficulty trying to exercise. This problem tends to be at it's worst during the hot summer months when dogs pant to control their temperature and find themselves struggling to breathe properly.

There is no medication available which can help this "mechanical disability". Surgery is the only viable option. Unfortunately, the larynx has a dual function. That is, to open up fully when the patient needs oxygen during exercise and to close tightly shut when the patient eats and drinks to avoid contaminating the lungs with food.

The problem with surgery is that we can only sew the larynx fixed in one position, that is, wide open, a "tie-back" procedure. Consequently only one side of the larynx is repaired in this manner. This means the airway is at least half open to facilitate better breathing and half closed to reduce the possibility of inhaling food into the lungs (aspiration pneumonia).

Fortunately, for "Ben" he and his owners have noticed a dramatic improvement in his ability to exercise and he is now much better equipped to cope with the current heatwave!

Terry Dunne BVMS, Cert SAO, MRCVS

This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)

***You won't care how much we know - until you know how much we care***