



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



### "Lucky", Dachshund with Thoracolumbar Disc Protrusion



It always bothers me when I meet a patient for the first time who has been given the name "Lucky!". I always feel that this places an unnecessary burden of expectation on the pet concerned.

I have visions of great disappointment within the household when the poor animal fails to deliver the lottery numbers yet again! I also wonder whether some owners hope to keep their pets in good health by naming them so.

I therefore had some concerns when Mr and Mrs Beer "Lucky" the 6 year old Dachshund to see me suffering from a bout of back pain. It soon became apparent over the forthcoming days that "Lucky" was in fact experiencing a severe episode of a slipped disc or disc protrusion. This resulted in "Lucky" becoming paralysed and unable to walk or use his hind legs

The spinal cord is heavily protected by a large number of blocks of bone (vertebrae). These vertebrae can move in relation to one another. The "disc" which has a jelly like centre sits below the spinal cord between the vertebral blocks of bone connecting, supporting and protecting the spine acting as a concussive device (shock absorber). Unfortunately, in some breeds of dog like Dachshunds these discs lose their pliability and in fact become quite rigid. Consequently, when the spine moves these discs are forced upwards to bang against the spinal cord rather than absorb the force exerted. Sadly, this can leave some patients permanently disabled and paralysed.

The ability to recover is dependant on how much damage the spinal cord experienced. Careful neurological examination is imperative in determining the long term forecast. When treating these patients it is extremely important to understand the recovery may well be very slow taking many months. During this time the nursing and support of these disabled patients is largely undertaken by the owners who require a significant degree of commitment. Luckily, for "Lucky" he was very fortunate to be owned by such a couple and I am very glad to say that he is making excellent progress regaining the use of his hind legs "What were those lottery numbers again, Lucky?"

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

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