



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



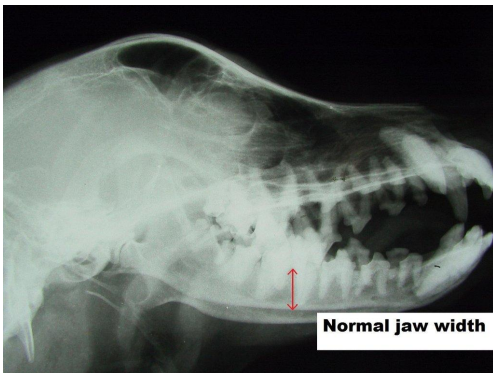
### "Lucy" - West Highland White with Lion Jaw



Lucy

It is difficult to imagine how little "Lucy" could ever be considered to be a dangerous wild animal but the fact remains that she is recovering from a condition known as "lion jaw!"

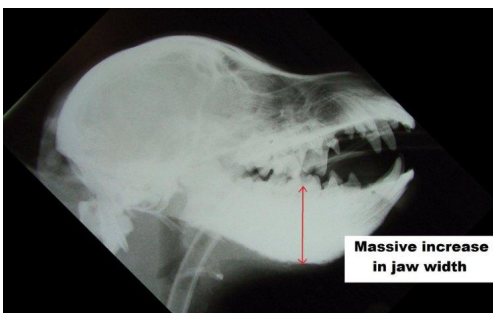
West Highland White terriers are a very popular breed of dog and with good cause! Originating from Scotland (always a good start!) they are generally more friendly and manageable than other more tenacious terrier types. Generally confident, they will interact well with family members and rarely cause much anxiety amongst the Fairfield Staff! Unfortunately though, they do seem to get more than their fair share of problems.



X-ray showing normal jaw width

Skin and respiratory disease are well documented and the most common problems with which we will be confronted. "Lucy's" condition however is much less common with only 1 case appearing every few years. "Cranio-mandibular osteopathy" or "Lion Jaw" is a hereditary disease which affects primarily the bones of the skull, particularly the lower jaw (mandible).

Occurring in young puppies aged around 4-6 months the mandible undergoes a remarkable transformation. Large amounts of new bone are produced around the lower jaw which can often be very painful. This alteration results in a much larger "set of jaws" for the patient's size which explains the reference to lions! Usually, the disease will run its course and eventually the mandible will return to a more acceptable shape. Pain relief is usually all that is required throughout the course of this bizarre condition.



Lucy's X-ray showing increased jaw width

Thus far there have been no recorded reports of patients developing a corresponding "roar". So as far as "Lucy" is concerned I think we can consider ourselves safe.....for the moment!

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***