

on Tom's foreleg. He was a little subdued and we were concerned about him.

The next step was a fine-needle aspirate (FNA) to determine what the lumps were. A FNA is used to suck out some of the lump material and squirt it on to a microscope slide. We sent the sample to the laboratory for a pathology examination. The conclusion was that Tom had feline leprosy.

There are two main avenues of treatment: medical and surgical. Sue and I decided to start with the medical approach and if it didn't work then we would surgically remove the lumps at a later stage.

I prescribed some homeopathic drops, a broad-spectrum antioxidant for immune support and a strong drug, Rifampicin, to kill the leprosy bacteria.

The morning of his second dose of Rifampicin, Tom had a reaction to the medication. His face and paws swelled up severely, his breathing became laboured and his life was in danger.

Luckily, Sue spotted the problem and quickly brought him into hospital. We gave Tom adrenalin as well as corticosteroids to help his body to resolve the reaction and placed him on intravenous fluids.

Additional supportive treatments were given later – intravenous Vitamin C, which boosts recovery, and a therapy called Neurological Integration System (NIS). Originally developed for humans, NIS has profound effects on balancing the body and restoring health. It is used to help animals with a variety of health issues including stubborn infections and trauma.

Tom was initially very subdued but through the day he made a steady recovery and he went home that evening to have his dinner, a little tired but much brighter. The next day he was just about back to his normal smoochy self and the astonishing thing was that the leprosy lumps had reduced to half their size overnight.

Because of his reaction to the drug, he didn't get any more medication but made a full recovery. The lumps disappeared completely within a few days and he and Sue haven't had to return since. 🐾



* Dr Liza Schneider is a director of award-winning Holistic Vets in Tauranga and President of the Holistic Veterinary Society. Liza likes to educate, inspire and entertain people about her passions, sustainable healthcare and the importance of preserving our natural heritage.



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