

“Sam” is a 15 year old DobermanX who has been coming to Campbell & Galloway since he was a very young dog. He is a friendly character but can also be a little bit nervous when coming to visit the vet! In July 2008, Sam’s owner brought him into the practice because she had noticed a growth on his lower lip. It had appeared fairly suddenly and grown quickly over just a few months. The vet and Sam’s owner decided to have the growth removed and sent to the lab to be examined. When the results came back, they showed that the growth was an **oral malignant melanoma**. This meant it was a tumour of the skin that had the potential to spread. Sam recovered well from this surgery and the wound on his lip healed without any problems.

Then, in January 2009, the mass started to grow again. Sam had another general anaesthetic to remove it while it was still relatively small. Again, like the trooper he is, Sam bounced back from his surgery without too many complaints. He still didn’t appreciate coming in to see us though!!! Sam was doing well after this second relapse and it was another 8 months before we saw signs of the tumour

coming back. During this time, Sam was kept comfortable using anti-inflammatories and any infection was controlled with antibiotics. Despite the obvious growth in his mouth, Sam was very happy at home – eating and drinking as normal – and he wasn't showing any signs of distress.

At the end of November, Sam came back into the surgery (reluctantly!) as the growth was now affecting his teeth. The vet discussed Sam's options with his owner and it was decided that we would carry out a **rostral mandibulectomy**. This involved the complete removal of the front part of Sam's lower jaw. The surgery was carried out on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009. As well as surgery, Sam required 48 hours of fluid therapy to help support him throughout his procedure and recovery. He went home with his loving owner that evening, albeit a little wobbly and bleary eyed.

Sam returned the following day, much brighter and looking like his old self, for observation and monitoring. He surpassed everyone's expectations when he started to take small amounts of food fed to him by hand. The icing on the cake was when, later that evening, he ate from his food bowl all by himself. He actually licked it clean! It was lovely to see him doing so well so quickly. He was very happy to see his owner when she came to collect him . . .we even got a waggy tail!

In the days and weeks that followed, Sam came on in leaps and bounds. His wound was healing nicely and he continued to improve at home. Despite his nervous nature, Sam would allow us to check his wound with only the slightest grumble. On his final check up, he trotted in looking as handsome as ever. You almost don't notice his shorter lower jaw and he seems far more comfortable now that the growth is gone. It is amazing how well animals cope with surgery and Sam has proved himself to be a very strong and brave little dog. He definitely deserves the title, Pet of the Month.

Before



After

