

To Whom It May Concern:

Our adorable 4 year old Maltese injured his esophagus by swallowing a no rawhide chicken chew. It was immediately apparent that he was in major stress. He was hospitalized for 1 week and the diagnosis, after an endoscopic procedure, was Esophageal Stricture. The lining of his esophagus was damaged and developed scar tissue that was closing his esophagus, preventing him from swallowing his food unless it was liquefied. We were referred to a Veterinary Internist and selected Dr. Julie Stegeman from the Southern California Veterinary Specialty Hospital in Irvine, CA. Dr. Stegeman recommended a Balloon Dilation. This was performed under anesthesia once a week and was repeated 5 times over a 6-week period, however Panda did not respond to the treatment. We were afraid we would have to put our lovable puppy to sleep. The Dr. told us of another procedure that is little known, called BE Tube, which was our final attempt to save Panda. Dr. Stegeman placed the BE Tube in Panda. The BE Tube consists of both a dilating balloon and a feeding tube in one. Panda tolerated it quite well. We followed the instructions of twice daily inflations, administering various medications, and cleaning the exterior tube entrance daily. The BE Tube was in place for 6 weeks. During the last 2 weeks we inflated the balloon 3x a day. After the 6-week period, Dr Stegeman removed the BE Tube and verified that Panda's treatment had indeed repaired his esophageal stricture. It healed and reverted back to the normal diameter size before his injury. After experiencing 5 separate balloon dilatations over 6 weeks, I would absolutely request the BE Tube placement as the first choice of treatment. This procedure would have been far better for Panda medically allowing a shorter time period, and financially for us. I am thankful for Dr. Stegeman's care, concern, and determination in treating Panda. She and her assistant, Allan, were wonderful to us and Panda. I highly recommend Dr. Stegeman and the Southern CA Veterinary Specialty Hospital, and most of all the BE Tube placement for treating Esophageal Strictures. The BE Tube is made by a company called MILA International, Inc. Sincerely,

Peggy Merritt "pet parent"

PANDA wants to say Thank You too!!

