

MISS MOLLY MARIE'S REPORT
ON HER EXPERIENCE AT THE
ANIMAL REHABILITATION CENTER OF MICHIGAN INC.
or
SWIMMING AND MASSAGE WITH ROCHELLE!
9/19/05

Miss Molly Marie has the beginnings of arthritis in her spine. This is something that we can't even tell is happening in her day-to-day living but I suspected that there may be something going on due to her reaction in agility, particularly on the jumpers course where there are many consecutive jumps required. (She likes the standard course and has progressed into Excellent A. While there are jumps, they are broken up by all of the other contact equipment and tunnels and weaves.) On the jumpers course, she sometimes stops and looks at me and has to be encouraged over the jumps as we get further into the course. I thought perhaps it was uncomfortable for her so had her x-rayed. This is how we discovered the beginnings of the arthritis. It may not become obvious in day-to-day living for years yet. But mom is a Type A who can't just let well enough alone. We started looking at things to help her be comfortable as she ages and hopefully make the effects of this easier on her for a longer time.

In an effort to help her handle this, we looked into chiropractic care. She has had several sessions with the doggie chiropractor and they may be helping but she really did not like going there. She puts up with the sessions but hates the tool he uses which makes a loud click. I recently talked to a lady who lives in the Chicago area whose dog has advanced spondylosis (same diagnosis as Molly). She is doing water therapy and has found it to be very helpful for her boy. So I looked into it. I found the location in Waterford which isn't too far away. As everyone has told me, they can't stop the progress of the arthritis but they can help her to develop muscles that will help her compensate for it and they can show me how to massage her to make her more comfortable as the arthritis advances. I did not expect Molly to like this either since she hates baths and hates machines that move and make noise. And she has not been very successful at earlier attempts at massage but we decided to try it and see how it went.



This is the water tank. There is a treadmill in the bottom. Molly went into the tank and they started to add water. I stood at the end and distracted her with cheese. She was happy to get the cheese and didn't seem to much notice the water that eventually came up to her shoulders. Then they started the treadmill. It turns out to be very quiet and she didn't panic when it started. She began walking and swimming until she got settled and figured out how to keep her feet on the floor. While doing this she was too busy for the cheese. But she did a good job and didn't seem to mind it at all. She did two 10-minute sessions at 1 mile an hour in water. If she doesn't get stiff and sore, it will be a bit faster next time. Then when this was done, the water drained out and she left the tank.



Little Miss Dirty face* seems to be telling me that she thinks this might be a "good thing"!



First they dried her off and then put a heat pack on her spine for a bit. She seemed to think this was okay.



Then the massage began. Ummmmm, good!!!



Yep, this is good stuff!!



Hmmm...a little more over here please!

Miss Molly has promised not to tell her brother what we did because he will be jealous. However, Rochelle loaned us a videotape to learn how to do the massage at home and he might just be our first victim!!

Well, we think this might be just the thing for Molly Marie. We will do four sessions and then decide what schedule to put her on for the future. But I think two little white doggies and maybe some fosters will be getting at home massages in the future!!!

*Her dirty face is the result of staining this August when she got into something outside. Hopefully it will clean up like it did last winter!! Molly is my little tomboy!

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