



Just recently, we saved an 8 year old dog who had been neglected for a long time, shuffled from house to house as the various human dramas played out. The dog was subjected to domestic abuse in several of the homes. In fact, it got so bad at one point, that the drunken abuser actually kicked in the front door and beat the dog's owner so badly that she would up with a concussion. The abuser was sentenced to prison for awhile, but got out and tried to resume the abuse.

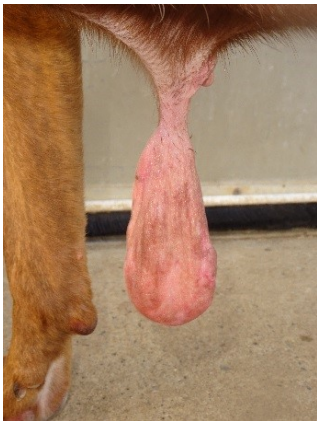
Understandably, in the years of trauma, the dog developed a great fear of strangers and of physical and verbal violence. Despite the risks to her, and her fear, she would try to intervene and protect her owner from being abused. The result was that she was beaten as she tried to save her person. Sad beyond words.

Somewhere along the line, she suffered an injury to one of her nipples. A large growth developed. As time went on, it started to stretch the skin to the point where it looked like a pendulum of skin hanging from her chest. It's difficult to describe it so we're including a picture.

Because the dog, named Cocoa, had never been spayed, and had had a couple of litters, we were very concerned that she might have cancer. Unspayed females are much more susceptible to cancer, and she had been through so much trauma that we feared the worst.

So was the decision facing us: do we take in a scarred and traumatized dog who had several strikes against her? She is a Doberman/pitbull mix, so that's one limitation in the eyes of many. She is psychologically traumatized and may take months or longer to become stable enough to be placed in a home. And she needs surgery for the mass removal, spaying, and all the bloodwork and diagnostics involved with all of that. Plus she needed vaccinations, testing for Lyme, heartworm, etc. and a multitude of other things.

AND that's just what we knew at the moment we had to decide her fate.



Her family was being evicted and had no one to take her. At least, no one who would provide her with what she needed. In addition, other shelters they contacted refused to help her except to euthanize her.

Of course, our friends and supporters know that we will do our best for each animal, even those who seem hopeless. We at least have to TRY. This dog had been through hell, and we were her last chance.

We are so happy to give our friends an update. Cocoa had her surgery and did well. Best of all, the mass was biopsied and turned out negative for cancer. What a huge relief!

Her bloodwork and other tests were also fairly good, so she should have many fulfilling years ahead of her.

What she needs now is time. Time to regain her belief that she is loved and safe. A belief that no one will hurt or threaten her or those she loves. A belief that each day brings good things: kind words, soft caresses, enough food, and stability,

We are grateful for being able to help Cocoa and so many others.