

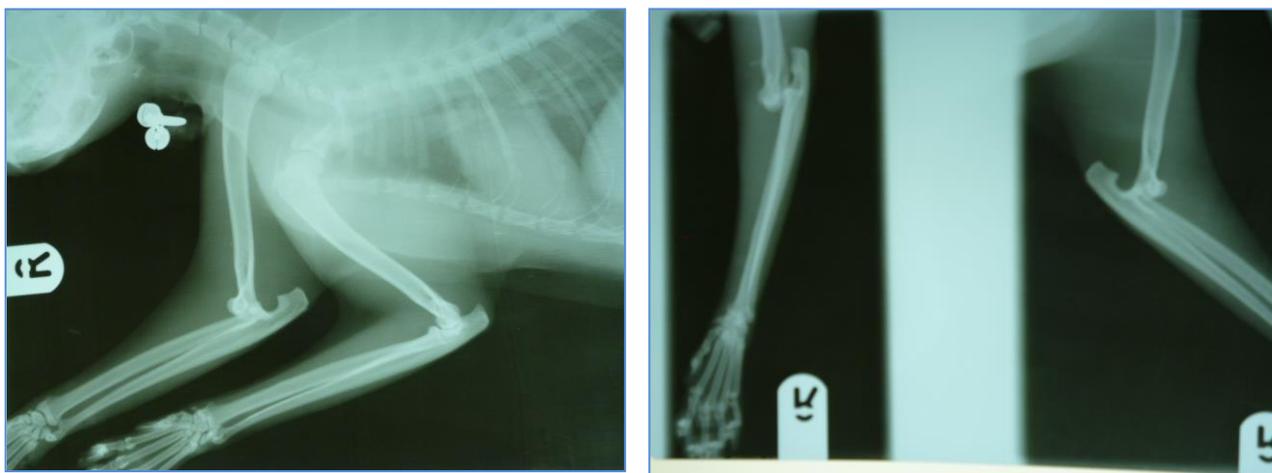


Tim's Surgical Column

SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT THIS FUNNY BONE!

Dave the cat was a happy go lucky chap, used to pleasing himself on his frequent trips away from home. He presented to us one Friday afternoon hopping lame on his right foreleg, which looked as though it had been twisted round, with the bottom of his paw facing upwards. Unable to bear weight on this leg, he was sore on palpation, particularly around his elbow and the lower part of his humerus (the 'funny' bone).

Dave was quickly admitted to x-ray his leg, and the x-rays looked as follows:



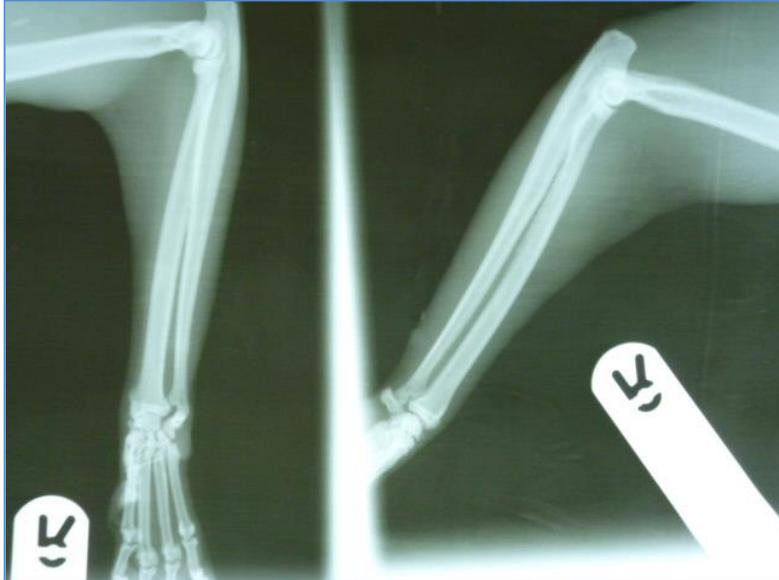
If you compare Dave's elbows in the left x-ray picture, you can see that he has dislocated his right elbow.

This is known as a lateral luxation of the radius and ulnar (the two bones which together form the elbow), and is a less common injury compared to leg fractures in cats, usually following trauma, eg a Road Traffic Accident. We think he managed to get his paw trapped, possibly in a drain cover, and dislocated his elbow while twisting his leg trying to get away.

We gained permission to anaesthetise Dave, and after some manipulation under General Anaesthetic (and a quick phone call to our expert Orthopaedic Vet!) we reduced the dislocation to a much more normal looking elbow joint. Further

manipulation revealed no further injury to the collateral ligaments of the elbow, and the joint was very satisfactorily stable when we woke Dave up from anaesthetic.

X-rays taken following reduction looked like this:



- which is a much more normal appearance!

Dave was rested for several weeks following his adventure and is now back to menacing the other local cats and cars; back to business as usual.

We were able to reduce Dave's dislocated elbow because we saw him soon after this injury had happened. This means we were able to diagnose the

problem and manipulate his elbow back into position without having to resort to surgery (or 'open reduction') as the leg wasn't excessively bruised and the muscles hadn't contracted to make treatment more difficult.

If your pet is limping or you have *any* concerns about your animals, it is always better to take him to a vet sooner rather than later, as this gives us a better opportunity to diagnose and treat the problem before further complications arise.

Just like our special friend Dave.



Dave