

# Canine Cancer Personal Stories from Bedlington Terrier Families

<http://btca-heart.com/healthwellness.html>

Cancer is in more recent years the number one killer of dogs and humans. Our Bedlington families and friends are sharing some short stories of their 4 legged loved ones diagnosed with canine cancer. Some stories are from the past, some are recent, and one story is of a survivor (Lillee). Personal experience with cancer for our dogs and family is often heartbreaking, but educating yourself might be most helpful for what's to come. When cancer is a suspect for your "fur child", people want to learn immediately what's next and understand how to approach the situation with the best veterinary science, hope, and compassion for your dog.

If you can share a short story, please contact us and submit your synopsis of the experience to Isabel Ganz at [mamabell510@comcast.net](mailto:mamabell510@comcast.net) or Lacie Thrall at [laciethrall@yahoo.com](mailto:laciethrall@yahoo.com).

#	Dog & Owner's Name with Canine Cancer Personal Stories
1	<p><b>"Bee" -- 8 ½ year old female</b> Pat Mills / Sacramento, CA / <a href="mailto:imdover@yahoo.com">imdover@yahoo.com</a></p> <p>I took Bee into the dentist to have her teeth cleaned July 21st, and she was fine when I picked her up. The vet had to extract 3 bottom incisors that were beginning to protrude from her jaw and were caused by a tumor that was also removed. The next day she showed signs of difficulty breathing so I assumed it was a reaction to the anesthesia and took her back to make sure she was hydrated and have her checked. The Dr put her on some antibiotics. Bee did not improve and stopped eating, so I went back in and the Dr checked her lungs and said she has pneumonia. Armed with antibiotics to be given twice a day I went home and she still showed no signs of improving so back to the vet I went and we did x-rays of her lungs to see if there was something else going on. As we looked at the x-rays, the vet pointed out the cancer in her lungs, one of which was pretty much completely damaged and we saw that the cancer was spreading to her lymph nodes. It was obvious that the cancer was in very late stages. We began discussing her chances and they were minimal, but naively, I thought I could keep her alive by sheer force of will. I began a trip to Canada armed with massive amounts of medication. By the time I got to Washington two days later, she could no longer breathe without great effort and I made the decision to put her down. She was suffering and nothing I could do would alleviate the situation. Discussions with my vet after wards on how this could have happened were merely guesses. I did not post her after putting her to sleep as I just could not do it. I should have done it, but she was my baby and emotionally I was a wreck.</p> <p>This is not the first dog I have lost to cancer, but it certainly was a shock and happened so fast that I was not prepared and really came apart over it. I miss her terribly and the boys seem to know that something is wrong as they insist on being with me all the time now. Bee was diagnosed on the 26th of July, 2009 and I had to put her down on the 29th. She was 8 years and seven months of age. No pathology. It all happened so fast and she was unable to breathe at the end, one lung was completely gone.</p>

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2	<p><b>“Powder” -- 4 year old female</b> Jeri Bernard / Pleasanton, CA <a href="mailto:powderis@comcast.net">powderis@comcast.net</a> Ch. Serendipity Uptown Girl, "Powder". Symptoms.. would not jump on bed or into car. One shoulder had constant muscle spasms. Took her to the vet..who prescribed muscle relaxers. No help. Took her to a chiropractic vet who noticed warm in the neck area....minor adjustment. Two days later would not put any weight on front foot with the shoulder spasm. Took her back to vet who wanted to put her on Prednisone....I said no, that something was wrong. He recommended an orthopedic doc who checked out her x-rays and said they would have to go in to see what was going on. After a 4 1/2 hour surgery with 16 staples from behind her ears down her spine, he say he had never seen so much deteriorated disc material. They sent it to the lab. 2 days later osteosarcoma of the spine. I said could they have made a mistake ....he said yes, that they then sent it to a panel of 5 doctors. 1 day later ....osteosarcoma of the spine. All of this was within a span of 10 days, and she was gone. I put her in the car when I got the results of the panel of 5 and had her put down. She was in pain the whole time she was home after the surgery (5 days). She was put down the day before she was 4 years old. Yes, I got a bleeding ulcer from this mess. I still miss her.</p>
3	<p><b>“Happe” -- 8 year old spayed female</b> Lacie Thrall / Mesa, AZ (<a href="mailto:laciethrall@yahoo.com">laciethrall@yahoo.com</a>) My experience was with one of my female Bedlingtons, "Happe" who died of cancer in 1986 at age 8. Happe had a cancerous tumor in her jaw that was visible only later in the progression of the disease. I don't remember the type of tumor or if that was determined by my vet. First symptom was from her sinuses -- a thick, opaque discharge from her nasal passage that would come every few days to once a week. She appeared in pain at this time of the discharge, but after the symptom passed in a few hours she appeared normal and we could not see the tumor. At the time, my local vet put her on a steroid (Prednisone) treatment as we did not have many options that were not cost prohibitive at the time. Eventually the tumor was visible inside the back of her jaw. I knew very little other than it was "cancer". Her diet was whatever she would eat. She died within about 4 months. As it turned out, I should have put her down sooner &amp; it taught me a lesson about not prolonging the pain for my dog, after all the love she gave to me over the years.</p>

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4	<p><b>"Jasper" -- 16 year old male</b> Sonia Calvert / Wellington, New Zealand <a href="mailto:sonj_77@yahoo.com">sonj_77@yahoo.com</a> We had our bedlington for around 16 years in Yorkshire, England in approx. 1986. He was given to us from a family member who used to breed the dogs. I was the same age as he so don't remember too much but I believe he got a tumor in his testicles. He was on steroids for a brief period but I don't remember whether he was treated with anything else. He was a fussy eater too, so again, it was really whatever we could persuade him to eat. He was around 16 when he was diagnosed but could have had it for a while I suppose and I think he went downhill pretty fast. We let him go when he was having trouble walking and really didn't seem to be enjoying life anymore :(</p>
5	<p><b>"Lillee" -- 14 + year old female (cancer survivor at age 8)</b> Sally Schill / Columbus, OH / <a href="mailto:SGS2690@aol.com">SGS2690@aol.com</a> My female CH Meadowsweet Lillee Bluestar had a malignant mammary tumor removed at a 8 years of age. The first indication was a lump found during regular grooming; the mass was removed during a surgical procedure with my regular vet and the pathology report confirmed a malignant mammary tumor.</p> <p>The only treatment was the removal of the tumor. Since the original mass was removed several additional masses have been removed, including a nipple, but none of the other masses removed were malignant. All except the first were benign.</p> <p>No special diet was recommended. Lillee is now 14+ years and doing fine.</p>

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6	<p><b>“Lola” -- 6 year old female</b> Ling H. Yang / <a href="mailto:ling.h.yang@gmail.com">ling.h.yang@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Our female blue Bedlington died of lymphoma at age 6 on August 7, 2008. Two lumps on her neck were noticed while she was with her pet sitter (July 16-20). In addition to the swollen lymph nodes, Lola had increased need for water and urination (due to hypercalcemia). Poor girl had accidents in the house while I was a work. I took her to the vet the following weekend (on July 23rd). Dr. Tung found that ALL her lymph nodes were swollen and told me she was sure it was lymphoma. She aspirated one of the nodes and sent it to the lab.</p> <p>On July 30th, the vet had confirmation from the lab that Lola had lymphoma. I did not have her lymph node biopsied; I didn't see the point when the vet had confirmation through the aspiration (biopsy would have more precisely pinpointed what stage her cancer was in). The vet guesstimated her cancer to between stage 3 and 4. I opted for palliative care vs taking her to a vet oncologist for chemo. I could not afford the chemo. Plus, it would only buy her a short amount of time.</p> <p>The vet prescribed 10 mg of prednisone in the am and 10 more in the pm. In addition, she was given 5 mg of pepcid in the morning. She was allowed to eat her usual diet and her appetite seemed unaffected. I was told the prednisone would help decrease the size of the lymph nodes. But eventually, it would stop working and the lymph nodes would swell to a size that would affect her breathing and swallowing.</p> <p>Lola was scheduled to go back to the vet 10 days later to be re-checked. However, on the evening of August 6th, Lola started to moan and I promised her she wouldn't have to suffer anymore. I was hoping I would have more time with her but her quality of life had rapidly deteriorated and I knew it was time. On August 7th I took her to the vet. She went to sleep very quickly, before the vet even gave her all the anesthetic. The vet said from the swiftness of her sleep that she was weak and there was no doubt that this was the right thing to do. My girl died in my arms and I could not ask for more.</p> <p>I did not notice the prednisone helping with Lola's symptoms but then she was only on it for a week before she died.</p>

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7	<p><b>"Kiwi" -- 13 year old female</b></p> <p>Nancy Rodgers / Robinson, IL (<a href="mailto:bedlys4me@mchsi.com">bedlys4me@mchsi.com</a>)</p> <p>My experience was with one of my female Bedlingtons, "Kiwi" died of the age of 13 of cancer in 2008 at the age of 13. The first indication that we had that anything was wrong with her was that she started losing weight. So we took her to the vet and they ran all kinds of blood work, etc and could not come up with anything. They tried all kinds of medicine and nothing seemed to work. There are three vets in the office and none of them agreed on what it was either which didn't help. They did do an x-ray but they said that they could not see one kidney so that maybe she had a kidney infection. Then we were told to take her to the University of Illinois (where you take your dog and drop them off and they do whatever and you cannot see them while they are treating them) we heard of a place in Indianapolis called IVEC so we went over there. The first day she was there they found out that she had kidney and spleen cancer. Exactly what kind I am not sure of but it was cancer. Due to the length of time that she had it there was no treatment for her except to let her go. She was put down on January 14, 2008 with very little medicine. IVEC told us that they didn't think that she would make it until we made it over there. Kiwi was a gift from a friend and if you would like to read her memorial you can see it at <a href="http://angel-hearts.org/animals/dogs/roddgersnancy/kiwiwicketrodgers.phtml">http://angel-hearts.org/animals/dogs/roddgersnancy/kiwiwicketrodgers.phtml</a></p> <p>I also wanted to say that we have lost three other Bedlingtons that we cannot prove that it was from cancer. However the vets think that it was because they had the same symptoms as Kiwi. The thing is where we live we have a huge Marathon Refinery that is about 10 blocks from us that we can see the smoke coming from the stacks. Actually a hospital in Indiana said that they had to increase their cancer unit because of the increase of cancer patients from our county. So if the people are getting cancer, you know that the dogs and cats are too. I am so sorry for your loss. That is one reason why I started my website at <a href="http://www.angel-hearts.org">www.angel-hearts.org</a> for people and pets so that they could put up memorials for those that they loved and lost. Of course I have all of mine up there.</p>

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8	<p><b>“Molly” -- 13 year old female</b> Diana &amp; Larry King / Colorado Springs, CO / (719)235-0531 / <a href="mailto:gangstermama@gmail.com">gangstermama@gmail.com</a> / submitted by Pam Dickerson / <a href="mailto:pamdickerson@hotmail.com">pamdickerson@hotmail.com</a></p> <p>Molly Bedlington was a rescued Bedlington that came from a divorced household. She was placed with a wonderful family, Diana and Larry King. The Kings fell in love with Molly and treated her like a princess.</p> <p>Molly was ten years old when she went to live with the Kings. The previous owner sent all of her medical records. Some years before, Molly had pancreatitis but appeared to be over it long ago. When Molly was a couple months short of 13 years old in 2008, she began to lose weight. Diana took her to her vet and they ran blood tests and could find nothing wrong.</p> <p>Molly continued to lose weight going from about 20 lbs down to 14 lbs in a matter of about six weeks. Diana and I met and took Molly to my vet who recommended an ultra-sound. The ultra-sound showed calcifications in the pancreas. That was the missing clue. My vet said it was pancreatic cancer and that it was advanced and had metastasized to other organs. There was no treatment.</p> <p>Normal symptoms of advanced pancreatic cancer might include loss of appetite, diarrhea, vomiting, perhaps lethargy, perhaps seizures. During all this time, Molly had good energy, acted happy and ate very well. When we discovered it was pancreatic cancer, Diana watched Molly closely each day to make sure that Molly felt good, knowing that when she began to feel bad and show some of these symptoms, it would be time to let her go. Molly had another pretty good three weeks. On her second to the last day, she was showing more weakness as she was now really skin and bones with almost no real muscle. On Molly's last day, Diana saw that she was too weak to continue. Late in the afternoon (Feb. 2009), Diana and I spoke and Diana said that it was time to euthanize Molly that evening. Diana and her adult son, Robert, who also loved Molly, got ready to leave for the vet with Molly. The husband, Larry, was on a business trip and returned just in time to join Diana and Robert in bringing Molly to the vet. However, just before the family was to leave their house to meet me at the vet with Molly, she gave each of them some kisses and laid down between them and passed away. It surely did appear that she waited for Larry to come home.</p> <p>So this is mostly just a sad story about a sweet girl who left us too soon. Pancreatic cancer that has metastasized to other organs has no treatment. So all that could be done was to continue treating her like a princess and watching for the day when life was no longer good for her. Molly was fortunate to be in a home that was so aware of her needs and gave her all that was humanly possible.</p>

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