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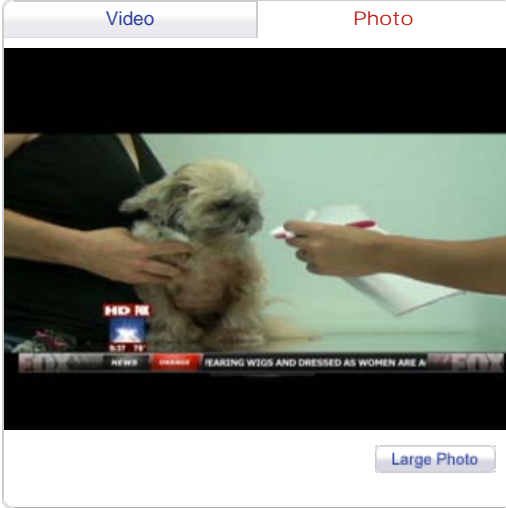
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# Stem cell treatment offered to pets

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By Steve Gehlbach  
FOX 35 News

ORLANDO, Fla. (WOFL FOX 35) - Some pet owners will do anything to make their furry friends feel better and live longer lives. Now a therapy still too new or too controversial for use on humans, is helping pets.

Val-U-Vet is offering stem cell treatments for animals at its six Central Florida locations in Seminole and Volusia counties. In the last few months, they've treated 22 dogs but they can also use stem cells to help other pets like cats and large animals like horses.

"Amey" is an 8-year-old Shih Tzu that had severe arthritis and would have to drag her hind legs on the ground. "She was hurting. You could tell she was in pain just trying to move around," owner Lila Najjar said.

She drove to the vet's office thinking they may have to put "Amey" to sleep, but 60 days later, the small dog is running around after being treated with stem cells.

"So far, the progression is really surprising, almost shocking," said Dr. Dan Evers, a veterinarian at Val-U-Vet.

The treatment, which costs \$1,800, takes the stem cells from fat removed from the same animal. "They're extracted, processed, stimulated to wake up, so to speak, and then we turn around that very same day and we inject them back into the dog," said Evers.

The miracle building-block type cells are injected into the blood at the joints that are causing problems. Evers says they seek out the damaged areas and can actually grow new cartilage and tissue.

Results vary for each animal, and the complete impact can take months to see, but Brian Clancy says it didn't take long to see a change in his 12-year-old black lab mix, named "Midnight." "Actually, we noticed a difference in a week. We could start seeing it," he said.

At the dog's 30 day checkup, her owner says "Midnight" is a whole new dog. "Just amazing what she's doing now," Clancy said. "She sleeps through the night, not incontinent, not on any pain pills, she hangs out with the other dogs."

To learn more about the treatments and watch before and after videos, go to the company's website:

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