

Stem cell treatment gives Honolulu dog better life

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In recent years, Kumba, a 13-year-old rottweiler mix, and beloved pet, had been living a life in pain.

"Kumba had a lot of problems with his back legs; both his hips and his knees were affected by really severe arthritis and he was having a hard time getting up and down and his quality of life was really being affected," said Dr. Cristina Miliareis, who is a veterinarian at Surf Paws Veterinary Hospital in Hawaii Kai.



Reports show it's a painful problem affecting up to 40 percent of the 164 million cats and dogs in the [United States](#).

"When we heard about the therapy, it was an option for us and for Kumba to live a better quality of life," said Kumba's owner Rumi Hospedar.

In June, veterinarians took fat tissue from Kumba's shoulder, separated the stem cells, then injected it back into his ailing joints.

In the past, veterinarians had to send tissue to the mainland, but a company called MediVet provided the equipment to do it all in clinic.

"He came back today so we could check up on him and see how he's doing," said Dr. Miliareisis.

She said most of their pet patients are more than 10 years and no longer candidates for orthopedic procedures.

So for the family, they couldn't be happier knowing Kumba has another chance at being the kind of dog, they know, he wants to be.

"Kumba's doing much better he's spends a lot more time moving around. He's much more active and my biggest vision of Kumba is him galloping around like a horse because when he's happy he's galloping around the back yard with almost like a smile on his face," said Hospedar.

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