

# Rounds

Animal Health  
Department  
Medical Rounds

"medicine for all"



Caring for Stranded Marine Animals

NATIONAL  
MARINE  
L I F E  
CENTER

# Notes

Veterinary Research  
Department  
Under the microscope

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Rounds Notes is a report on the health of animals at the National Marine Life Center from Sea Rogers Williams VMD for the staff, volunteers, and community of the center including professionals involved the captive care of similar species, the views expressed are not necessarily that of NMLC. Information in Rounds Notes should be considered confidential and used solely to benefit the health of aquatic animals everywhere.

November 20, 2012

Rounds Notes

7: 23-24 (2012)

## Headlines News: Bulla for You

**"I'll flush and I'll flush and I'll blow your house down in" - A. Wolf**

Antibiotics . . . check

Two full weeks of something broad spectrum that would get Mycoplasma . . . check

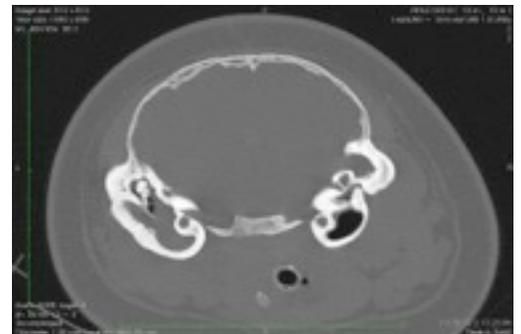
Flush through the bulla daily . . . check Flush the stuff right out the nose ? . . . check

Add topical antibiotics and steroids into the ear . . . everyday

Make the discharge worse then better . . . did that

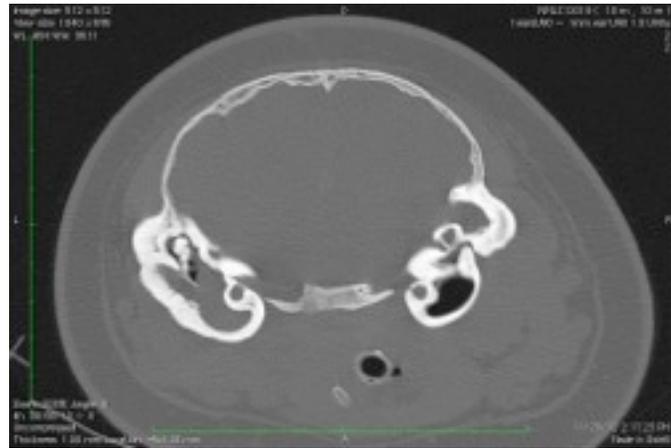
oh, you you fixed the ear ? . . . nope!

A surgery to open the ventral bulla and remove the infected mucoperiostium, flush out the infected contents, and place a drain to allow all the material to flush out is scheduled for next week at a local veterinary specialty center. There are many perils to the surgery, if we open any one of a large number of arteries in the head, the hemorrhage could be sudden and fatal. Using power drills on the skulls is not without risk, and don't even get me started with seals and general anesthesia. As crazy as it sounds, it is also not always possible to know just what the state of the bulla is during a bulla osteotomy. Once the muscles and periosteum are retracted the surgical field, which is only a few centimeters, fills with blood. Almost constant suction is needed to keep the field clean, and the drill is cooled with a flush of sterile saline, things happen pretty quick, the bone opening is created, the thick mucoperiostium lining is incised, the contents flushed out some of the tissue is taken for histopathology and culture. With the suction is really not easy to know what's in there and the biopsy and cultures take weeks. So, to satisfy everyone that surgery is really indicated, we repeated the CT under ultrashort acting anesthesia at WHOI CSI to day to answer that question, and while some minimal progress was made the left bulla is still filled with fluid, but osteomyelitis is not yet evident. So we'll continue with the planned surgery, and attempt to cure this infection of the middle ear.





CT #1 10/23/12



CT #2 11/20/12 (after treatment)

## Clinical Update: Hotlips

**some healing, new wounds, and a very sick but tough little seal**



Hotlips is making some progress but is still dreadfully underweight and suffering from serious wounds, we are going to have to address some dental work at some point as well, but the nostrils may be able to seal and close, so a water test is in her future. Some new wounds on the hind flippers and surfaced and are also being treated. We'll follow her with additional blood work and radiographs.

Most concerning is that a right aural discharge was noted yesterday, oh my . . .

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