

German Shepherd Returns to an Active Lifestyle Following VetStem Cell Therapy for Gracilis Myopathy

Willow, a German Shepherd, received VetStem Cell Therapy for gracilis myopathy and returned to an active lifestyle following treatment.

POWAY, CA, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Willow, a German Shepherd, was diagnosed with gracilis myopathy in 2024. Gracilis myopathy, also known as fibrotic myopathy, is a muscle disorder seen most commonly in German Shepherd Dogs that affects the gracilis muscle in the hind leg. The condition causes scarring and contracture of the muscle, which leads to lameness, abnormal gait, and reduced activity.



Willow

To help support Willow's mobility and overall quality of life, her veterinarian, Dr. Joy Fox-Beaudet of [Arcata Animal Hospital](#), recommended [VetStem Cell Therapy](#) as part of a comprehensive treatment plan. Stem cells have biological properties that may help downregulate inflammation, support tissue repair, and promote healing. In addition to stem cell therapy, Willow underwent laser therapy, shockwave therapy, acupuncture, and therapeutic ultrasound.

Stem cell therapy has been investigated as a potential treatment option for challenging orthopedic and soft tissue conditions in veterinary patients. A [published study](#) evaluated the use of VetStem Cell Therapy in working dogs diagnosed with semitendinosus myopathy, a muscle disorder affecting the hind limb. In this retrospective study, researchers reported improvements in gait and reductions in muscle lesion size on ultrasound following stem cell treatment, suggesting that adipose-derived stem cells may have potential as a therapeutic option for select cases of muscle injury and myopathy.

To begin the VetStem process, Willow's veterinarian collected a sample of her own fat tissue

during a minimally invasive anesthetic procedure. The fat tissue was aseptically packaged and shipped to the VetStem laboratory, where technicians processed the tissue to extract and concentrate Willow's regenerative cells. The resulting stem cell doses were prepared and shipped back to Dr. Fox-Beaudet for administration. The remaining cells were cryopreserved for potential future use.

Following her initial treatment, Willow received two follow-up treatments using her cryopreserved stem cells. Shortly after her third treatment, her owner shared the following about her progress, "The stem cell treatments have stopped the progress of the disease, so she is able to walk, trot and run normally. Without this treatment and physical therapy, her right hind leg would very likely be completely lame. On the contrary, she is able to lead a normal life, going to the beach and playing with her friends. We are very grateful that we could get such excellent care for Willow." Her veterinarian added, "With time, over the course of the last year, her condition has regressed, but with ongoing home physical therapy, she is stable and still significantly better than when she was first diagnosed."

VetStem Cell Therapy has been used in thousands of animals with a variety of orthopedic and soft tissue conditions. As part of a comprehensive treatment plan, stem cell therapy can provide veterinarians with an additional option for managing challenging conditions. Willow's case demonstrates that VetStem Cell Therapy may provide meaningful clinical improvement and enhanced quality of life for dogs with gracilis myopathy. As with many chronic orthopedic conditions, long-term outcomes can vary among patients, and continued disease progression may still occur over time despite treatment. One of the unique advantages of VetStem Cell Therapy is the ability to cryopreserve a pet's stem cells, providing access to a potentially lifelong supply of their own cells for future treatments if needed. Learn more at www.vetstem.com.

About VetStem, Inc.

VetStem is a veterinarian-led company that was formed in 2002 to bring regenerative medicine to the profession. This privately held biopharmaceutical enterprise, based near San Diego, California, currently offers veterinarians an autologous stem cell processing service (from patients' own fat tissue) among other regenerative modalities. With unique expertise acquired over the past 20+ years and thousands of treatments by veterinarians for joint, tendon and ligament issues, VetStem has made regenerative medicine applications a therapeutic reality. The VetStem team is focused on developing new clinically practical and affordable veterinary solutions that leverage the natural restorative abilities present in all living creatures. In addition to its own portfolio of patents, VetStem holds exclusive global veterinary licenses to a large portfolio of issued patents in the field of regenerative medicine.

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