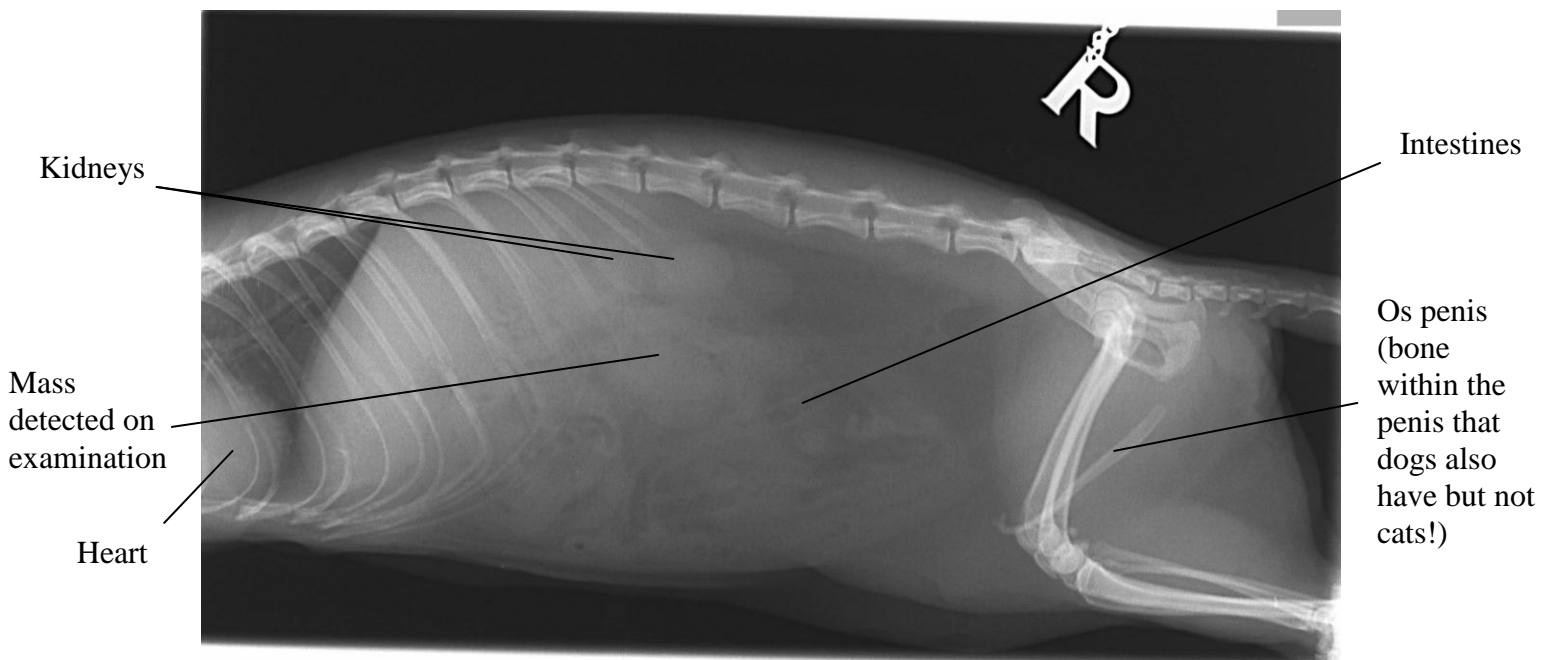


SPROUT

Sprout, a 15 month old polecat ferret, came into the hospital because he had had some bloody diarrhoea and he was not himself. Kate, one of our vets, gave him a thorough clinical examination, and he seemed very bright and well in the consult room. He was given some fluids by injection under the skin and went home on a course of antibiotics. Sprout improved initially but he then became unwell again, not wanting to eat and he had green-coloured diarrhoea. At this stage we sent away a stool sample to check for any parasites and bacteria that may have been causing his diarrhoea. The results did not show any specific problems.

We then took an xray of Sprout's abdomen, as a small mass could be felt. He needed to be anaesthetized for this as he was required to stay very still whilst the xray was taken, so it was not blurry. The mass that was felt matched up with a suspicious area on the xray. This can be seen below.



After discussions with Sprout's owner, we decided to investigate further. This involved Sprout having an operation to look inside his abdomen. Small animals are at higher risk under general anaesthetic as they can lose body heat very quickly, therefore it is very important they are kept warm and the anaesthetic time is kept to a minimum. The mass in Sprout's abdomen was

an enlarged intestinal lymph node, whilst the rest of his abdominal organs appeared grossly normal. Kate took biopsies from the lymph node and also from his intestine to send away for examination. We were concerned that Sprout may have lymphoma – a type of cancer. Luckily the results came back as eosinophilic enteritis, a type of inflammatory bowel disease which can be managed. Sprout recovered very well from his operation and couldn't wait to go home to play with his brother and sister.



Once his wounds had healed he was started on some medication to reduce the inflammation within his intestines and he was kept on one brand of ferret food. His diarrhoea resolved and he was very active again. We then cut down his medication until it was stopped all together. As you can see Sprout is doing very well and he is staying clear of any foods other than his normal diet!

