

Paws Up for Pets

Boca veterinarian is beating cancer and conquering social media

Let me introduce you to Dr. Lindsay Butzer, representing a new breed of veterinarians. In addition to treating pets at the Clint Moore Animal Hospital in Boca Raton, she is a rising social media star. Her posts and videos on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook have garnered more than 20 million views.

And she is a cancer survivor, gutting through five rounds of chemotherapy after being diagnosed with leukemia at the onset of COVID.

“When I got the diagnosis of leukemia, my heart dropped,” she recalls. “I was 27 and in healthy shape. I ran a marathon and two half-marathons. I was working six days a week and started dating the love of my life,” Tim Chambers.

She and her family elected to have her go to Houston to be treated by a team of physicians considered leaders in treating her type of leukemia. That was in early 2020.

“It was the first time I was in a private jet, and I had no platelets and needed a blood transfusion hours before the flight,” Butzer says. “At the Houston hospital, the head doctor of the leukemia division said I would lose my hair from the chemotherapy treatments. I told him, ‘I don’t care about my hair. I want to live’ and so, the rounds of chemotherapy began.”

Then COVID hit and she



Dr. Lindsay Butzer of Clint Moore Animal Hospital in Boca Raton was diagnosed with leukemia in early 2020. She has been in remission since later that year. Photo provided

could no longer have visitors in her hospital room. The only way to connect with Tim and her family was through Facetime.

“By the third round of chemotherapy, I went into sepsis, and I was alone and terrified,” she says. “There were ice packs all over my body and my temperature soared to 104 degrees.”

That was her lowest point. She needed to take a full year off from her veterinary duties as she slowly regained her strength.

“I went into complete remission, but I had two more rounds of chemotherapy just for safety measures,” Butzer says.

During this time, she sported a blond wig and began posting pet tips on various social media outlets. She decided to be candid about her health.

“I told people about my leukemia, about my remission and posted my bone marrow results,” she says. “People were rooting for me and that made a big difference.”

Follow Dr. Butzer

You can view hundreds of short, helpful videos created by Butzer on her YouTube channel, which sports about 50,000 subscribers: www.youtube.com/@drlindsaybutzer. She can also be found on TikTok (@dr_lindsaybutzer), Instagram (www.instagram.com/lindsaybutzervm/) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/Lindsay-ButzerDVM/).

In June 2020, Butzer posted a video showing her without the wig as she gave tips on how to bathe a cat.

“I told them I was done wearing a wig and ready to conquer cancer and that took a lot of people’s hearts away,” she says.

Butzer doesn’t take any day for granted these days. But she also cherishes her childhood memories that led her to become a veterinarian.

Her father, Dr. Brian Butzer, bought 5 acres in western Boca Raton about 30 years ago to open the Clint Moore Animal Hospital.

“I grew up in a double-wide mobile home while my parents were building the animal hospital,” Lindsay Butzer says. “Because I grew up there, I would hold my dad’s hand and go with him at night when he would check on the dogs with IVs or ones who just had surgeries. Seeing him have such a passion for animals impacted me. I knew as a young child that I also wanted to be a veterinarian.”

It turns out that she also inherited her father’s desire to educate people about pets beyond the exam room.

“My dad would appear on Animal Planet and other television shows and clients would tell me, ‘Your dad is famous because he is on TV,’” she says. “Back then, television was the place to be. There was no social media to speak of.”

Today, messages can be delivered on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook — all platforms that Lindsay Butzer has mastered. But each has different ways to communicate.

“TikTok is a fast-paced, short video under one minute that stands alone and offers immediate satisfaction,” she says. “By contrast, videos on YouTube are longer and offer people a place to learn something. I write scripts for

my YouTube posts and spend two days a month filming with a professional videographer. But my posts on TikTok, Instagram and Facebook are all done on my iPhone with me doing editing at night.”

Watch out for Bufo toads

On a recent YouTube video, Butzer shared safety tips about what to do if your dog encounters a Bufo toad. These toads release a toxin called bufagenin that can cause dogs or cats to hypersalivate, display red mucus membranes, stagger when walking, develop seizures, experience cardiac arrhythmias and even die.

“Bufo toads are most active in the rain and from around 5 p.m. to sunrise, so please practice caution when letting your dog out in your backyard or sniffing around the water’s edge of a canal or other body of water,” she warns.

If your pet does bite a Bufo toad, she recommends you immediately rinse out his mouth for a few minutes and call the nearest veterinary clinic to alert it of your arrival. Fortunately, most toads do not pack the toxicity punch that Bufo toads do. Regardless, do flush out your pet’s mouth with water, making sure you point his nose downward, so the water flushes out.

“The prognosis for survival is good if the pet is treated quickly with activated charcoal, IV fluid therapy and if needed, medicine to support the heart,” Butzer adds.

Butzer’s cancer has been in remission for three years, but she says it takes five years to be deemed officially cancer free. She says the leukemia diagnosis clarified her path in life.

“I tell people to do what they really love doing and what makes them happy,” she says. “What makes me happy is working with animals and educating pet owners on how to take care of their pets. I feel blessed and lucky.”

Arden Moore is an author, professional speaker and master certified pet first-aid instructor. She hosts the nationally syndicated radio show, Arden Moore’s Four Legged Life (www.fourleggedlife.com), and the Oh Behave podcast on Pet Life Radio. Visit www.ardenmoore.com



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