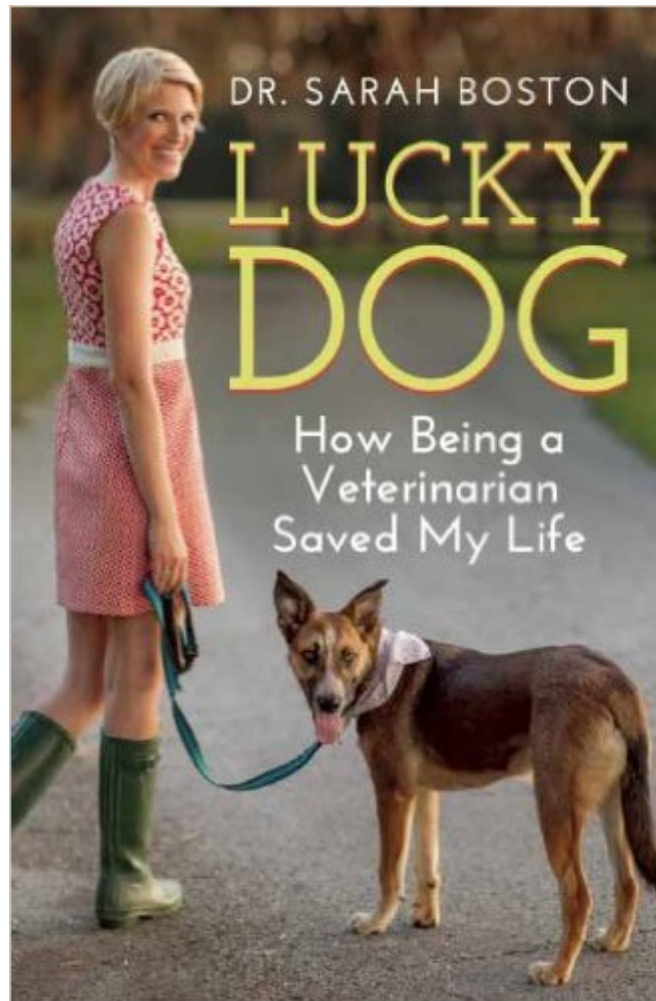


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# Lucky Dog: How Being A Veterinarian Saved My Life



## Synopsis

What happens when a veterinary surgical oncologist (laymen's term: cancer surgery doctor) thinks she has cancer herself? Enter Sarah Boston: a vet who suspects a suspicious growth in her neck is thyroid cancer. From the moment she uses her husband's portable ultrasound machine to investigate her lump; he's a vet, too; it's clear Lucky Dog is not your typical cancer memoir. She takes us on a hysterical and thought-provoking journey through the human healthcare system from the perspective of an animal doctor. Weaving funny and poignant stories of dogs she's treated along the way, this is an insightful memoir about what the human medical world can learn from the way we treat our canine counterparts. Lucky Dog teaches us to trust our instincts, be our own advocates, and laugh while we're doing it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Reading this as a specialist veterinary surgical oncologist (trained by the same "legend" as Dr Boston) and as a cancer patient I can take a focussed perspective on this publication. She nailed it. However, the health care system I experience in Australia is not as sloth like as the Canadian system was for Sarah. Like her, my health care team is fantastic. Also like her I can see that were I a dog the whole process would be barely punctuated by any waiting periods. The families of my patients wait an average of 48 hours for histopathology (biopsy) results for instance. Work ups and surgery can be on the same day in many circumstances. Although cancer is a chronic disease, suspicion of a cancer diagnosis or seeking treatment for a diagnosed cancer is an emergency for

the patient and their families. Veterinary oncologists treat cancer this way. We do this because we can and I realise this is not always possible with the constraints imposed on human health care. Sarah's book is not a whinge about the human health care system, it is not a description of one person's cancer battle, it is so much more. Like so many of us in this profession, Sarah knows the importance of translational research. This means the knowledge gained by treating pets with cancer translates to knowledge about human cancer and vice versa. She is part of this "one-cancer" approach. Her language in the book is fresh, funny and tangible. There is passion in the paragraphs and it is not "over-the-top". As others have commented, you will laugh and cry. Sarah is an advocate for her own health, her patients, their owners and by writing this book, she has supported all of us who fight daily to help pets with cancer all over the world. We are lucky dogs! Thanks Dr Boston.

I highly recommend Dr. Boston's book to anyone, whether you are an animal lover or cancer survivor or just a human on this planet. She cleverly and sweetly weaves her story about diagnosing her own thyroid cancer and navigating the Canadian health system with her experiences as a veterinary surgical oncologist. Throughout her story, she indirectly gives great advice to those of us with pets in how to give respect to veterinary medicine and respect to those professionals are passionate about it. This issue is of special importance to me as I have a sister who is a successful veterinarian. I came across this book by reading a story about it in the University of Florida's newsmagazine, while, ironically, waiting for my husband to come out of surgery at Shands U of FL Hospital. I pre-ordered Dr. Boston's book that very day and quickly read the 300 page book last night upon its arrival from , laughing out loud several times and shedding a few tears along the way. After reading of her challenges with the Canadian health system, I have a renewed appreciation for our American health system, albeit not a perfect one. We certainly have experienced the best of doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals at Shands U of FL teaching hospital for humans! Thank you, Dr. Boston, for sharing your experiences and for giving hope to those of us with pets whose quality and quantity of life can often be made better by you and your colleagues' knowledge, expertise, dedication and compassion. Respectfully submitted, Terri Whitacre, owner of an adorable toy poodle, Roxie

The author is a veterinarian/oncologist, who has extensive experience treating very ill dogs with cancer. By some cosmically unfortunate coincidence, she herself contracted a malignant cancer of the thyroid. In alternating chapters, she writes of her own experience fighting the cancer alternating with stories from her own clinical practice. Her descriptions of the dogs' illnesses and her treatments

of them are both moving and loving. In all cases, she treated her canine patients, and their owners, with love and sensitivity, and anyone will enjoy reading these chapters. As for her own cancer, she had to do battle with the Canadian health service as much as she had to battle her own illness. Her account of the bureaucratic bungling, the long waits for test results (3-4 weeks for a biopsy result!), the many doctors who assured her that she was fine, when she knew she wasn't, the fight to actually get herself treated--this will leave the reader absolutely infuriated, but throughout her ordeal, including her own dread and anxiety, the author narrates the experience with an overflow of humor and irony. I loved this book, and read nearly all of it in one sitting. .

Great book!! I really enjoyed this book by Dr. Boston. It was easy to follow and her stories were so relatable and funny. After reading this boook, it made me appreciate my veterinarian even more and the the fast and exceptional care he provides.

Anyone with complaints about the American health care system should read this book. It makes the Canadian system look even worse. And, for that matter, the way animals are treated by veterinarians comes off looking better than either one. Sarah Boston is a veterinarian in Canada. She is a cancer surgeon who spends her days diagnosing cancer in animals, mostly dogs, and excising what she can through surgery. So when she feels a lump in her throat, she knows enough about anatomy to realize it's her thyroid gland -- and that the lump could mean cancer. The book follows her meandering and often frustrating path through the Canadian health care system as she goes from doctor to doctor. She has a strong feeling that she has cancer, but has a hard time getting the tests that prove it. Interspersed throughout the book are stories about the animals she has treated -- much more quickly, and often to better effect, than human treatments. Some anecdotes are funny; others are sad. Boston is a realist with a heart. As someone who has owned a number of dogs through the years and dealt with a lot of veterinary treatment for them, I found this book fascinating for its glimpse of specialist veterinary care and touching for its stories about people and their beloved pets. Her story of her journey through the Canadian health-care system was an eye-opener. Yes, everyone eventually gets treated, but you normally have to wait awhile -- and in some cases, quite awhile.

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