

Dog who survived being hit by a car and shot is ready for adoption

An East Tennessee dog who has won the hearts of thousands is about to head home.

Riley, a one-year-old yellow lab, has been at the University of Tennessee's Veterinary Hospital since April. **He was hit by a car and shot in the head in Washington County in April.**

After several surgeries and an extensive rehabilitation program, Riley's doctor says he's made a "tremendous recovery."

"The only problem is he wants to run full speed, and he's not quite ready for that yet," said Dr. Marti Drum.

Riley required surgeries to remove bullet fragments, set a broken leg, and repair a fractured spine. During his rehabilitation he re-fractured his femur, requiring an additional surgery.

His daily routine now includes walks around the hospital. Like a typical one year old lab he's ready to go, but his body is still working to keep up.

"What he tends to do is he gets so excited he falls down and then just keeps going, even though he doesn't have his legs underneath him," Drum said.

She estimates Riley will be able to run normally within a month.

Riley will be leaving on Friday to join his new adoptive family in Massachusetts. Transporting him from Knoxville to New England will be Kyle Peterson from the A&E Network's "Last Chance Highway".

The family was identified through the rescue group "**Labs4rescue**".

"It's unbelievable. From seeing him at his worst, to now seeing him be able to walk, is just amazing in itself," said Deb Yokley, who helped place Riley with the family.

She has also visited regularly throughout his rehab.

"He never gave up, the staff here never gave up on him. It was an experience for me as

a rescuer," Yokley said.

It is an experience that has inspired Yokley.

"I plan on having a lot of tears," she said.

And a rescue group that has inspired Riley's doctors.

"I think its just a tribute to how good people can make a bad situation turn out into a great situation," Drum said.

Riley's story has lead to a **Facebook page in his honor**, with nearly 4,000 members.