



Vets in training can practice on this fake Fido.

PLAYING DEAD

Anatomically correct stuffed animals will help keep your doggie healthy.

Dissect your average stuffed animal and you'll find nothing but polyester fibers. But poke around in FRED and you'll encounter an esophagus, stomach, duodenum, and intestines. The Flexible and Rigid Endoscopic training Device is an anatomically correct doll that serves as a realistic, inexpensive, low-maintenance training critter for veterinarians. The idea isn't to actually cut it open but to learn to perform minimally invasive procedures, like threading an endoscope down a dog's throat. "There's artistry involved in scoping," says Jacqueline Whittemore, a 39-year-old assistant professor of medicine at University of Tennessee's Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences, who created FRED as a no-risk way to train. (Would you want a nervous n00b vet to explore your pooch's tummy?) She adds that if the trainee gets lost they can simply unzip the patient to find their way.

FRED's plush outer husk was "rescued" from Goodwill, and his authentic-looking gastrointestinal tract was pieced together with items from bike shops, kids' novelty stores, and great grandma's button box. Whittemore also plans to add respiratory and urinary modules, as well as the option to do biopsies and "foreign body retrievals," like when Rex swallows your car keys. Next step: mass producing the dogs as a cheaper alternative to the current training models or to virtual reality trainers, which can cost upwards of \$100,000. Here's a fantastic voyage view of FRED's stomach (right). —Arnie Cooper



DATASTREAM Organisms named after celebrities.

