

# Radiation improves odds for baby koala

A BRAVE baby koala has undergone radiation treatment to cure a rare and debilitating disease.

Two-year-old Sprinkles cannot survive in the wild due to her sialosis, which causes her salivary glands to be hyperactive making her drool uncontrollably.

It stops her from eating normally, and the excess drool has caused dermatitis on her tiny body.

Radiation treatment on Tuesday at the Brisbane Veterinary Specialist Centre should reduce the size of her salivary glands, and stop the excessive flow.

BVSC founder Dr Rod Straw said Sprinkles will head in for a second

dose of radiation next week and may need another within a month.

The debilitating disease has been the latest trial in the rough life of the tiny koala. She has been in the care of Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital for the past year after her mother was hit and killed by a car on the Warrego Highway.

Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital veterinarian Dr Amber Gillett said she had only ever seen two other cases of excessive drooling in her six years treating koalas.

"The long-term outlook for Sprinkles was uncertain at first, but with the support of BVSC the future for Sprinkles is brighter," she said.



**LIFE-SAVING THERAPY:** Dr Rod Straw and Dr Amber Gillett (right) with the tiny patient, Sprinkles the koala, who is undergoing radiation treatment.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED