



Post-Operative Instructions: Arytenoid Lateralization (“Tie-Back”)

Summary:

Thank you for trusting your pet to our surgical care. Your dog has had an arytenoid lateralization procedure involving “tie-back” of the airway cartilages to open-up the airway to allow easier, more comfortable breathing. This surgery has significant potential for severe post-surgical complications including the possible failure of the procedure. It is essential to allow your pet time to heal and to avoid injury during recuperation. Please strictly follow the instructions below.

Recovery Instructions:

1. Observation:

- Any abrupt change in your pet’s breathing (e.g. it becomes hoarse again) is serious. Report this immediately. Failure of the tie-back procedure, if it is going to occur, will typically do so within the first 4-6 weeks following surgery. If failure occurs, it may or may not necessitate another corrective procedure and we will need to determine this if such a problem develops.

2. Activity:

- No running, jumping, free access to stairs, or rough playing with other pets or children.
- NO BARKING! Any significant barking or other ongoing vocalizations can compromise the integrity of the surgical incisions and cause the potential for failure of the procedure. Please keep your dog in a calm, controlled environment (limit visibility to squirrels, birds and cats, disable doorbells when appropriate etc.) in which he/she is less inclined to bark.
- HARNESS walk only three times daily for bathroom breaks: do not, under any circumstances, place a collar or neck lead on your pet - this is a lifetime regulation: only chest harness leashes should be used on your pet.

3. Incision:

- Monitor the incision daily for signs of infection such as increased redness, swelling or discharge. If you observe any of these signs or if the surgical site suddenly becomes painful to the touch please call us immediately.
- If your pet scratches at the incision, he/she must be discouraged from this behavior. Please call if uncontrolled scratching becomes a problem.
- Keep the incision clean and dry (do not apply anything to the incision). No bathing or swimming for 14 days.

4. Medications:

- Give all medications as directed and call us if you believe your pet is having an adverse reaction to any of the prescriptions.

5. Food:

- Your pet should have access to water at all times and eat his/her normal diet.
- It is important that your pet not “inhale” food quickly as this can cause food to be aspirated into the lungs. If you have difficulty slowing your dog’s eating habits please call us for additional suggestions.
- Whenever possible, feed your pet multiple smaller meals throughout the day instead of one or two larger meals.

6. Recovery:

- Your pet should show steady, continual improvement. If your pet seems lethargic, acutely painful, or simply is not doing well please call us immediately.

7. Recheck:

- Please schedule an appointment for suture/staple removal 10-12 days after surgery. Additional follow-up needs will be determined at that time.

8. Future Considerations:

- Please note that, from now on, your pet is at risk (~20% of patients) for developing aspiration pneumonia. This risk is a consequence of surgery; does not diminish over time and is present for the remainder of your pet's life. Aspiration pneumonia is a potentially life-threatening problem if not identified promptly. The first signs of this condition, even before the development of a cough, include refusal of food, development of fever and lethargy, and weary or quiet behavior. Usually, your pet will develop a moist, deep cough within 24 hours of demonstrating these symptoms. If you notice any of these signs it is important to notify us immediately!

9. Questions:

- Our foremost interest is your pet's rapid and complete recovery: Do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns.