



Post-Operative Instructions: Patellar Luxation Stabilization

Summary:

Thank you for trusting your pet to our surgical care. Your pet is recovering from surgical repair of a luxating patella. Surgery involved aligning the patella so that it would remain within the trochlear groove and no longer slip out of place. During the reconstructive surgery, part of the tibia was cut, moved and stabilized with small pins. The pins hold the bone together until it has time to heal. It may take 6-12 weeks for complete healing. It is essential to allow your pet time to heal and to avoid re-injury during recuperation. Please strictly follow the instructions below.

Recovery Instructions:

1. Activity:

- *No running, jumping, free access to stairs, or rough playing with other pets or children.*
- Do not allow any unrestricted or off-leash activity, or free access to stairs or slippery floors.
- Restrict activity for the next 8 weeks to allow complete healing of the surgical site.
- Activity must be limited to very short leash walks three times daily for the purpose of going outside to the bathroom *only*.
- Confine your pet to an enclosed area such as a small room, dog run or dog crate. After recheck radiographs confirm adequate healing at 8 weeks postoperatively, you may gradually return your pet to full activity.

2. 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 licks the incision, he/she must wear an E-collar until the staples are removed as licking can provide a source of infection.
- Keep the incision clean and dry (do not apply anything to the incision). No bathing or swimming for 14 days.

3. Medications:

- Give all medications as directed and call us if you believe your pet is having an adverse reaction to any of the prescriptions.
- If your pet loses his/her appetite, begins vomiting or develops diarrhea or dark/tarry stools please call us immediately.
- We may prescribe sedatives for your pet's safety and to assist you in enforcing exercise restriction. It is important to note that most pets will begin to use the affected limb within 2 weeks of surgery (notify us if he/she does not!) and that, in spite of this increase in comfort and use, you must continue to enforce the exercise restriction. *Explosive, off-leash behavior can be devastating to your pet and injure or tear the joint and undo the surgery.*

4. Food:

- Your pet should have access to water at all times and eat his/her normal diet.

5. Recovery:

- Your pet should show steady, continual improvement. If he/she seems lethargic, acutely painful or simply not doing well please call us immediately.
- Your pet should progressively improve his/her ability to walk on the operated limb. Many patients will not walk on the limb initially but begin to walk on it over the next several weeks. If your pet is not touching the leg down and using it within 10 days of surgery please call us.

6. Recheck:

- Please schedule an appointment for suture/staple removal 10-12 days after surgery
- Radiographs (x-rays) must be taken at 8 weeks postoperatively. Please schedule an appointment for this procedure and note that there will be additional fees associated with this recheck radiographic study. Sedation may be required so do not feed your pet the morning of these appointments.

7. Questions:

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