



Referral Animal Hospital, P.A.

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DIPLOMATE, AMERICAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

Patellar Luxation Surgeries

Your pet must be kept in a confined area such as a dog run, kennel, or a small room within your home for the first 4-6 weeks following knee surgery. The purpose of such confinement is to prevent your pet from damaging the repair by running through the house and slipping on the tile/linoleum, i.e. when the door bell rings. After this period of time, your pet needs to be kept on restricted activity, leash walks for short distances (10-15 minute walks) and pool swimming only, for the next two months. This restriction will allow sufficient time for the surgical site and newly constructed/sutured ligaments to heal completely. Tranquilizers may be necessary to help keep your pet quiet. Your pet will rapidly develop a tolerance to these drugs however, necessitating progressively higher doses be given to effect the desired level of tranquilization. Only enough tranquilization to "take the edge off" of your pet and make them happy to walk rather than run is necessary. These drugs are not harmful or addictive to your pet in any way. **No off-leash activity should be allowed for at least 10 weeks following surgery.**

The bandage on your pet's leg should be kept clean and dry. If there is a chance that the bandage will come in contact with water or moisture, you should cover the bandage with a plastic bag. **Do not leave the plastic bag on your pet's leg for a prolonged period of time however, or it will cause moisture accumulation and skin infection underneath the bandage!** If your pet's toes are exposed at the bottom of the bandage, please check them daily for any signs of swelling. If they should become cool and/or puffy, the bandage may be impeding circulation and **should be changed immediately**. If this should occur, please contact us immediately. If your pet's toes are not exposed, pinch them through the bandage until your pet reacts to let you know he still has feeling in them. This postoperative bandage should last two weeks with proper care. Due to your pet's normal activity, the top may loosen and the incision site may become exposed. This is okay as long as your pet does not lick or chew at the incision area, the bandage still offers support to the knee, and you are still able to check your pet's toes. If the incision area looks as though it needs to be cleaned, you may daub the area with warm water and apply an antibiotic ointment to it if you wish. In most cases, this should not be necessary.

If you find that your pet is having difficulty in rising and/or walking with the bandage on, we suggest that you use a towel placed around the stomach to act as a sling for the hind quarters. Lift your pet gently and support the rear limbs while it walks. We would be happy to show you how this is done. In so cases, cutting two holes in the towel for your pet's legs to slip through, like a pair of pants, gives them better support than the towel around the belly alone.

Your pet may require a lot of patience and attention during this recovery period. Your biggest chore will be to keep your pet confined and inactive for a three month period. If you have any questions, or if you need help and/or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact our office. We are available by phone during normal business hours. For *emergency* situations during evening and weekend hours please leave a message and one of our staff will try to contact you as soon as possible. Thank you for letting us give your pet the extra special care it deserves!