

# Care of your Dog following Joint Fracture Repair

Patients name:

Primary-care Vet:

The following medications have been dispensed for your dog. Please ensure **all doses** are given. If you are having difficulty administering medications or your pet develops diarrhoea or vomiting please contact your Vet **immediately**.

Medication:	Dosage:	When to start:
Antibiotic:.....	Give .....	daily for .....days .....
NSAID: .....	Give .....	daily for .....days .....
Opioid: .....	Give .....	daily for .....days .....
Other: .....	Give .....	daily for .....days .....

## Key Points for Aftercare:

The operation site will have been clipped (other sites may also have been clipped for administering drugs and fluids etc). Avoid your pet interfering with the surgical (and other clipped) site/s. Most wounds will be covered with a light adhesive dressing and this often works loose, or can be removed, after the first 48 hours. Some dogs need to wear an Elizabethan protective collar to prevent attention to the stitches or dressings. If necessary, this should stay in place until the stitches are removed. It is important your pet **not be allowed** to lick the surgical wound, as this may introduce infection.

Your dog should be kept confined to restrict activity (ideally to a large cage, or alternatively a single **unfurnished** room with non-slip flooring). Running and particularly **jumping** must be avoided at all times. Short **leash** walks in the garden (several minutes four to six times daily) are recommended to allow toileting. Confinement should be maintained **at all other times** for at least the first six weeks and until your Vet has specifically indicated that confinement may cease, with the exception of scheduled rehabilitation as detailed below.

Some swelling of the operated limb in the days following surgery is normal. **Ice packs** for 10 to 15 minutes several times daily **are recommended** in the first few days following surgery to reduce swelling and improve comfort. Regular, gentle massage (e.g. sweeping motions from toes to hip or shoulder) may help dissipate oedema fluid.

**If the surgical site is causing excessive irritation, is discharging or if you are concerned swelling is excessive please seek veterinary advice.**

Range-of-motion exercises on the operated limb may commence five to seven days after surgery and may be performed several times daily, but **ONLY** if tolerated. Exercise each major joint of the operated limb e.g. for forelimb exercise carpus (wrist), elbow, shoulder, for hindlimb exercise tarsus (ankle), stifle (knee) and hip, paying particular attention to the operated joint.

Four weeks following surgery commence lead walking for 5 minutes at a time, two to three times daily, but **maintain confinement** at other times. Lead walking may gradually increase but should not exceed **10 minutes** at a time for the first eight weeks following surgery.

Hydrotherapy is beneficial to recovery but should only be performed in a centre with qualified personnel. A water treadmill is recommended if available. Hydrotherapy may commence at three to four weeks post surgery.

### **Re-examinations with Your Vet:**

- **Morning** after surgery if your dog was discharged the same day as surgery
- **3 days** following surgery: post surgery check-up
- **10 to 14 days** after surgery: suture/staple removal and/or check on wound healing
- **\_\_\_ weeks** following surgery: X-rays will typically be taken so please bring your pet in fasted
- Additional visits as indicated by your Vet

Please note that additional fees may be incurred at re-examinations. Please ask your vet about relevant fees.

**Gradual improvement should be expected following surgery. If deterioration occurs please seek veterinary advice.**

Please be aware that variation from the instructions contained herein may increase the risk of post-surgical complications or otherwise affect outcome; only make variations if **specifically advised** to do so by your Vet.