

Fracture of the Lateral or Medial Femoral Condyle

Your dog has suffered a fracture of the femoral condyle (of the knee joint). Femoral condylar fractures are quite rare, however when they occur the medial condyle is most frequently involved.

Fractures of the femoral condyle are typically repaired with an oblique or transcondylar lag screw; an additional lag screw, Kirschner-wire/s or a small plate may be used to augment the repair. Occasionally an external skeletal fixator may be employed.

As with any surgery complications may arise and are detailed below, although serious complications are uncommon.

- Even though very uncommon, anaesthetic death can occur. With the use of modern anaesthetic protocols and careful monitoring the risk of problems with anaesthesia is minimised, but never eliminated.
- Infection is an uncommon complication as strict sterile technique is used during the surgery and antibiotics are administered during and after the procedure. Statistically approximately 1 in 50 animals undergoing orthopaedic surgery are likely to develop a post surgical infection. Contamination of the wound in the early post-operative period may increase this risk e.g. your dog licking the wound in the first few days after surgery may significantly increase the risk of infection. Should infection occur, early detection and treatment generally results in rapid resolution, although very occasionally removal of the implants may be required once the bone has healed. More serious problems may occur if infection progresses untreated or if your dog suffers infection with a multiple resistance bacteria e.g. MRSA. If you suspect an infection contact your VET immediately.
- Excessive early activity will reduce the likelihood of the bone healing and will increase the risk of implant failure or loosening.
- Even after the bone has healed it is still important to have a controlled, gradual increase in activity, similar to human patients undergoing rehabilitation following surgery. If activity in dogs is increased too quickly after surgery straining of joint structures may occur. Rest and anti-inflammatory medications typically resolve these problems.
- Femoral condylar fractures may occasionally damage the caudal (and rarely cranial) cruciate ligaments.
- As the fracture is inside the joint it is inevitable that arthritis will develop and progress. Anything other than perfect anatomic alignment (which won't to be possible if there is fragmentation at the joint surfaces) will exacerbate this. Fortunately, most dogs recover reasonably good joint function, although intermittent lameness is not uncommon. A minority of dogs will experience some degree of permanent lameness.

AFTERCARE OF YOUR DOG FOLLOWING SURGERY:

Your pet should be kept confined (ideally to a large cage or alternatively a single room with **non-slip** flooring) to restrict activity. Short **leash** walks in the garden (a few minutes four to six times daily) are recommended to allow toileting. Confinement should be maintained at all times for first six weeks following surgery, with the exception of scheduled rehabilitation as detailed below.

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.

Passive range-of-motion exercises should be commenced within 3 days of surgery (if tolerated). Flex and extend the affected knee twenty to thirty times, and repeat three to six times daily.

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 two to three weeks post surgery.

DECLARATION:

I have read the information contained herein (2 pages) and am satisfied I have a sufficient understanding of the procedures my dog is scheduled to undergo, including potential complications that may occur and requirements for aftercare following surgery.

I hereby consent for my dog to undergo knee surgery as scheduled by my Vet.

Owner's signature:

Witness:

Print name:

Print name:

Date:

Date: