

London Veterinary Services

— in-house surgical referrals —

IMPORTANT DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS: Please read this form carefully when you get home.

We have performed a surgical fracture repair using internal fixation. This involves the use of internal metal implants to stabilize the injured bone(s) during healing. No surgical repair can withstand the rigors of normal exercise, and we must be vigilant to protect the repair very carefully during the early healing phase.

Please follow the instructions below very carefully:

- o The only exercise permitted during the first week of healing is very slow lead toilet walks. After one week start 5minutes on a lead increasing by 5mins twice daily each week to a maximum of 20mins two to three times daily
- o Avoid trotting which exposes the surgical repair to double the intensity and frequency of forces compared to slow walking.
- o Running and jumping will increase the forces acting on the repair by 5-10 times, and can cause acute surgical failure.
- o Avoid slippery surfaces and stairs.
- o For most dogs, the only way to avoid the above types of exercise is to use a pen, cage or small room confinement. Please ask the nursing staff about the best options.
- o Comfort levels should be good straight away and the leg should be used consistently within 1-3 days of surgery. Most pets will feel good enough to exercise, and it is an owners 'responsibility to prevent them doing so.
- o It is also important that the suture line is protected from self-trauma. Please use the E-collar at all times until your surgeon has advised you that it is safe to remove it (generally after the skin sutures have been removed). **Remember, it can only take a single lick to cause a problematic infection.** Any surgical skin

wounds should be clean, dry and free from any noxious odors. Please call us if you have any concerns regarding the appearance of the skin wounds.

o Please use the dispensed painkiller as instructed on the label. Side effects are unusual but include general malaise, vomiting, or diarrhoea. Please call us if you notice any of these problems or if you think you may have accidentally given the wrong dose.

o Hydrotherapy can be started 4 weeks after surgery and physiotherapy 2 weeks after surgery which will speed recovery and improve limb use and range of motion after surgery.

o We expect all animals to urinate within 24-48 hours of going home, and to defaecate within 4-5 days. If this does not happen, or you notice straining without passing of anything, please phone us for advice.

o The initial reassessment to remove any skin sutures and check limb function is performed in 7 day's time. If you have any worries at all regarding instructions for exercise restriction, medications, limb function, or the ongoing plan, please call us. We will give you some advice over the phone, and sometimes organize an early re-check.

o We will perform a re-assessment after 7 days, 2 weeks, 4weeks and 8-10weeks. At 10 weeks we may give a sedative to allow x-rays to be taken to assess the progress of bony healing. The exact time of this reassessment will be established at the time of discharge. Please remember not to give any food on the morning of this recheck.

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