

Home Care Notes for _____

Today I was in hospital for an Anaesthetic and Patella Luxation Surgery

To ensure that I have a smooth and speedy recovery, please take note of the following guidelines:

Rest and Confinement

- it is normal for me to be subdued, sleepy, anti-social and not quite myself for up to 24 hours following anaesthetic
- drowsiness will make me more vulnerable, wobbly and anxious, so confinement is for safety reasons
- keep me indoors overnight, caged, to limit activity and access to hazards and interference from pets or kids
- I will need a soft, clean bed at floor level, in a warm, draught-free, dark and quiet room with windows and doors closed

Things to Note

- I may develop a mild cough from the tube inserted to assist with breathing during surgery, this will disappear in a few days
- I may also have a small area of clipped fur on my leg from the IV catheter, blood pressure cuff and/or blood test

Eating, Drinking and Toileting

- ensure that clean, fresh water is within easy reach at all times and my head cone can fit over my food and water bowls
- tonight, if I am alert, give me a small quantity of soft food - I may refuse food or vomit after eating as result of the drugs
- toileting should be done in a confined space, a litter tray on the floor for cats and outside, supervised, on a lead for dogs
- changes to toileting frequency and consistency can be expected for 24 hours

Activity

- see attached Rehabilitation and Exercise Guidelines for comprehensive details
- running, jumping, playing is COMPLETELY RESTRICTED and swimming is not allowed

Medication

- please read labels carefully to ensure meds are given as instructed regarding dosage, frequency and with or without food
- if given with food, ensure that the meds are ingested completely, not eaten by other pets and not expelled with vomit

Daily Wound Care

- check my wound is dry and clean - if I chew or lick my wound or stitches, I will need an Elizabeth Collar (Cone) from the vet

Revisits:

please bring me in for a free postop check in _____ days _____

please bring me in for a free removal of stitches in _____ days _____

please bring me in for a bandage change in _____ days _____

IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONTACT THE CLINIC FOR ADVICE OR AN APPOINTMENT IF:

Your pet is uncharacteristically lethargic, grumpy, agitated, anti-social or in obvious pain

Your pet has excessive vomiting or diarrhoea or is still refusing food and/or water after 12 hours

The wound is bleeding, weepy, swollen, red, gaping or the sutures or bandage have been tampered with

Your pet is licking or chewing at wound, sutures or bandage

You have difficulty administering medication

You have any other concerns or questions

Thank you for trusting us with the privilege of caring for your pet.

Postoperative Care - Patellar Luxation Surgery: Rehabilitation and Exercise Guidelines

What to expect after surgery

The bandage must stay on for 5-7 days postoperative.

Your pet will need an appointment for 5-7 days postop to have the bandage removed and another appointment for 10 days postop to have the wound checked and the sutures removed. If there are no complications, the next checkup will be 1 month postop, then 2 months postop with possible x-rays to check the healing of the bone.

Take home Pain Relief/Anti-inflammatory Medication must be given as instructed on the label for at least 5-7 days postop unless otherwise advised by your vet. Once the bandage has been removed, if there is still swelling present, icepacks can be applied to the area, to reduce swelling and discomfort. Your pet should be discouraged from any licking of the wound once the bandage has been removed and a cone/Elizabeth collar should be fitted to prevent interference with the surgical site.

For the first 2-4 weeks your pet will probably hold the leg up most of the time and then start to place it and then progressively improve. Small breed dogs such a yorkies, poodles etc. will often hold the leg up for longer (i.e. 3-4 weeks). If you are concerned that your pet is not improving well enough, please call your Veterinarian for advice.

Tip: Glucosamines Supplements or Glucosamine Injections can improve the healing process and slowing down the buildup of Osteoarthritis, which is likely to occur.

It may take several days before your pet has a bowel movement, this is normal, since anesthesia can slow intestinal movement.

Wound Healing

Occasionally your pet may develop a small pocket of fluid called a seroma, around the metal pin we used to secure the bone. If the swelling is larger than a grape, let us know.

Although this surgery has a 90% success rate, some patients will still have a lower grade patella luxation than before surgery. Sometimes further surgery may be required.

Some swelling of the wound is normal, as is some bruising which can be very dark red. Often as healing progresses, the swelling can move down the leg to the ankle and the bruising can spread out.

Sometimes the wound will ooze some blood during the first 24-48 hours at home. You should not be alarmed at this; you can hold a cotton sponge over it for 5-10 minutes to stop the bleeding.

You may also notice some swelling at the point of the knee, and you may be able to feel small pins at this site. This is normal, since in some cases pins are used to re-align the kneecap, they are usually not removed unless they cause lameness and pain or migrate through the skin.

You should become concerned that your pet may have an infection **IF:**

1. the wound becomes very swollen or discharges a yellow or green material
2. your dog suddenly stops using the leg or becomes very depressed or lethargic.

If these signs occur, you should contact us on 09 372 8387.

Complications

As with any surgical procedure complications can occur.

Unlike human patients who can use a sling or crutches our patients do not know enough to stay off a healing limb.

RESTRICTING ACTIVITY IS A MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOU, THE PET OWNER

Failure to follow these instructions carefully can lead to delayed healing or even failure of the sutures or implants.

Exercise Restrictions

Weeks 1-3:

If your pet is small carry him/her outside or if he/she is larger roll up a towel and place it in front of his/her hind legs to act as a safety sling in case your pet slips.

After 5-7 days, you can generally stop using the towel.

Weeks 4-10:

All toileting still to be supervised and on leash.

At 4 weeks after surgery your pet should be able to tolerate gentle 5 minute leash walks.

At 8-9 weeks after surgery your pet should be able to tolerate gentle 10-20 minute leash walks.

- It is important to NOT LET YOUR DOG LOOSE TO RUN FREELY in the house, particularly up and down stairs.
- Your dog should ALWAYS BE ON A LEASH when going outside to toilet for the full 10 weeks of recovery.
- Swimming is NOT ALLOWED.