

Post Luxating Patella Surgery Instructions

The goal after surgery for a Luxating patella is controlled activity. We want the pet to move but not *run* or *jump*. Too much activity, including running, jumping and standing on the hind legs, may dislodge the bone wedge that helped to make the groove in which the patella rides deeper. (If the wedge should dislodge, a second surgery will be required to remove it and valuable cartilage will be lost.)

Also, in most Luxating patella surgeries, the tibial crest is moved and pinned to create a more anatomical alignment. A minimum of 8-12 weeks is required for the tibial crest to heal in its new position. Too much activity may cause the pins to migrate and the tibial crest not to heal. (The pins used are of a small diameter and are not removed, unless the pin creates a sore on the front of the knee at a later date.)

Pain management plays a key role in recovery. At no time should your pet be permitted to experience unrelenting discomfort. A non steroidal anti-inflammatory drug has been dispensed for the immediate 2-week post-operative period. If you find after two or three weeks that your pet still requires pain relievers, please call the hospital to discuss additional medications.

Post-discharge for 3 days (days ____ ____/ ____ ____/ ____)

1. Apply ice to the stifle (knee) joint for 15 minutes three times a day.
2. Leash walk *ONLY* to do business; *crate resting when not supervised is strongly recommended.*

Weeks 1 & 2 (days ____ ____/ ____ to ____ ____/ ____)

1. Apply a hot pack (damp hand towel warmed to temperatures between 104-113° F) to the stifle for 10-15 minutes two or three times a day (*DO NOT* use a heating pad)
2. *Crate resting when not supervised is strongly recommended.*
3. Begin *slow* leash walks of 10 minutes or less three times a day.

A recheck with suture removal should be schedule at 2 weeks post-operative (____/ ____)

Weeks 3-12 (days ____ ____/ ____ to ____ ____/ ____)

1. Discontinue hot packing
2. Gradually increase the duration of walks; running and jumping are to be discouraged until the end of 12 weeks.

Rechecks should be scheduled at 4 weeks (____/____), 8 weeks (____/ ____) and 12 weeks (____/____) post operative.

Every pet heals at his or her own pace. Progress will be assessed and discussed at rechecks but please call if you have questions or concerns at any time. At 12 weeks post-op, healing should be complete with return to full activity.