



Lone Star Veterinary Surgical Services

Surgical Solutions for Your Loved Pets

Surgical Release Form for Fracture Repair – External Fixator Information

Owner: _____ Patient: _____ Date: _____

Referring Hospital: _____ Veterinarian: _____

Surgery to be performed: _____

Your pet has been diagnosed with a fractured bone that needs surgical repair. Lone Star Veterinary Mobile Surgical Services (LSVMSS) doctor has evaluated your pet's radiographs and determine the best method of repair given your pet's age and type of fracture the best method of repair is an external fixator repair.

An external fixator is a device that is worn outside of the injured bone with stainless steel pins connected to the fractured bone that penetrate the skin and firmly lock onto a bar on the outside. Although these are typically bandaged to keep them clean and prevent them from "catching" on things, they still require some care by you to keep the area around the skin clean from debris and drainage. Some pets are simply not candidates for external fixators due to temperament or the inability to confine them properly after surgery. Some owners are not candidates to care for an external fixator due to physical limitations or time constraints. The use of an external fixator has many advantages over standard plates, wires, pins and screws in certain fractures with small fragments where a plate simply will not fit or when the bone is broken into many pieces and fitting them together is not possible.

Advantages of fixators include:

- They can often be placed in a "closed" manner without making any skin incisions which reduces surgery time and infection rates.
- They can be used with open and contaminated fractures as no foreign material (pins, plates) are left behind once fracture has healed
- There is less manipulation of the fracture area so important blood supply to the bone fragments is not disturbed allowing faster healing.
- They work better than plating for highly comminuted fractures (multiple fracture pieces)

Disadvantages of fixators include:

- Rechecks every two weeks to change bandages and tighten fixator
- Sedation needed to remove pins, which may be done in stages as healing progresses
- Diligent aftercare by you to keep the fixator clean and restrict your pet's activity.

Utilizing external fixators is a partnership between the doctor and the owner where both must do their part in order for the bone to heal quickly without any loosening of pins and with the least amount of discomfort to your pet.



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External Fixator- Aftercare Requirements

Please take a moment to review the aftercare instructions and feel free to contact us if you have any questions or do not understand something.

Confinement

Fixator patients simply cannot be allowed to roam the yard or be overly active while wearing the fixator. There must be strict confinement after surgery. You will need to confine your pet to a room, kennel, or small run after surgery that is clean and dry. When outside the confined area your pet must **ALLWAYS** be on a leash and only be allowed to move at a **slow walk**. At first your pet should only be allowed to walk as long as it takes him/her to eliminate. As times progresses and your pet does well the time and length of walks will increase per LVMSS's Doctors instructions.

Cleaning

The area where the pin penetrates the skin will always have some minor clear drainage that will dry and harden into crusts. These crusts must be kept clean to prevent pin infection or loosening. Properly cared for pins almost never get infected. These areas will need to be cleaned this area with a Q-tip and hydrogen peroxide every 24-48 hrs without fail. If you cannot do this you will need to bring your pet to the hospital to have a technician do this for a fee.

Tightening

The bolts on the fixator will need to be inspected and tightened every two weeks. You will need to purchase either an 8 or a 10 mm wrench and use it to tighten the fixator as directed. You will be shown how to do it by a trained technician or doctor.

Bandaging

The fixator should be covered to prevent self-trauma. 3X3 gauze sponges can be wrapped **around the device** and secured with ace bandages. **DO NOT wrap anything around your pet's limb!** This could result in loss of blood supply to limb and necessitate an amputation if left that way for any period of time. Bandages should be replaced if they become wet or soiled. You will be shown how to do it by a trained technician or doctor.

Dependability

Since this is a partnership, one of your most important jobs besides monitoring the cleanliness of the fixator and your pet's comfort is to keep your scheduled appointments for initial sterile bandage changes during the first ten days and bringing your pet to the hospital for progress radiographs. Failure to follow the above instructions can lead to implant loosening/ infection/ and possibly a **non-healing fracture** which could require another surgery at additional cost or even loss of the limb (amputation).

Please sign below that you have read and understand these instructions as well as the consequences of non-compliance.

Owner/Agent (print name)

Owner/Agent signature

Date