



Lone Star Veterinary Surgical Services

Surgical Solutions for Your Loved Pets

Postoperative care for Extracapsular Stabilization of Cranial Cruciate Ligament Injury

1. The surgery performed used extra-articular nylon sutures (outside the joint) placed to stabilize the joint in a normal alignment (*see picture*). Fibrous scar tissue will develop over time to enhance the stabilization.
2. An **e-collar is recommended for 10-14 days** to protect the skin incision
3. **Sutures are removed by your Doctor 10-14 days following surgery.** Your dog should not be bathed or allowed to swim until the skin sutures are removed. The incision should appear clean and dry, with skin edges well apposed and no redness or discharge from the site evident.
4. After sutures have been removed a **physical therapy consult** is recommended.
5. If excessive activity is allowed too soon following surgery, stabilization of the knee can be lost requiring additional surgery. Intermittent ice therapy of the surgical site during the initial 24-48 hours following surgery may help to reduce swelling and discomfort.
6. After surgery your pet must be **kept confined in a small area** (airline flight kennel or a small room) for **6 - 8 weeks after surgery**. Your pet may be walked a short distance outside on a leash up to three times daily to relieve itself only. No free activities are allowed. If you have your pet in a room with you it must be tied to a piece of furniture to prevent it from "running" to the door when it hears a sound. Your pet will need antibiotics following surgery.
7. **Return to your doctor for post-op exam 4 weeks and 8 weeks after surgery.**
8. If the knee is stable, then your pet may be confined to one room in the house when you are away. It may have free walk of the house when you are home (no stairs except to go upstairs to bed in the evening). If your pet is active and runs to the doorbell (and slips on the tile/linoleum) it needs to be confined to one room with good footing. You may begin to take your pet on short leash walks. Start with a 5 minutes slow leash walk. Increase the time of these walk by 5 minutes each week. This time may be divided into two walks daily. If at any time your pet appears weak (limb shaking) or tired, you should revert to the last distance/activity which it could tolerate without these symptoms and hold there for 1 week before once again trying to increase the activity level again.
9. If all is going well at 8-weeks, then you may continue to the progressively longer leash walks. Free run of the house and a small backyard are allowed. No off-leash running, jumping, ball playing, etc. is allowed. Again, if at any time your pet appears weak (limb shaking) or tired, you should revert to the last distance/activity which it could tolerate without these symptoms and hold there for 1 week before once again trying to increase the activity level. Between 12 and 16 weeks post-operatively, off-leash walking, jogging, and running is fine. No balls, frisbees, dog parks, or heavy activity is allowed for 6 months post-operatively. We recommend you avoid these types of heavy activity altogether, as there is a high percentage of dogs that will tear the cruciate ligament in the opposite leg (30% - most breeds, up to 50-60% in bull mastiffs, chows, akitas, etc.)
10. Adequan (PSGAG) can help keep your dog's cartilage healthy and intact. Adequan is given by intramuscular or SQ (under the skin) injection on a long term basis.
11. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) such as Rimadyl, or Deramaxx may be used as needed to treat muscle and joint stiffness and soreness as your pet rehabilitates. Side effects of all NSAID's include vomiting, diarrhea, and blood in the stool. Certain NSAID's have been linked to liver toxicity and other problems. If your pet will be on prolonged NSAID therapy, please speak with us or your regular veterinarian regarding possible side-effects of those NSAID's and what to watch for and what blood tests to monitor.



Client Signature

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