

Cruciate Surgery Post Operative Care

Immediate After Care:

- * Your dog will be very groggy and drowsy from the anaesthetic and pain relief, especially if it has had an epidural anaesthetic, so it is important to keep your dog inside and warm.
- * A small amount of food can be offered, but don't be concerned if your dog is not hungry tonight.
Make sure water is available.
 - * Ensure that the sutures or bandage are not being chewed or licked excessively - if this is happening a head collar may be necessary.
- * Check the wound for any swelling or abnormal discharge (it is normal to have some bleeding or oozing of clear or blood-tinged fluid). Contact the clinic if you are concerned.
- * A **support bandage** may have been applied after the surgery. It will be removed at the first post-operative check up. In the meantime check the bandage regularly and make sure it doesn't get wet or slip down the leg. If this does happen, cut off the bandage carefully with a pair of scissors.

Until the First Post-Operative Check Up:

It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to restrict your dog's activity and to stick to the rehabilitation plan for the surgery to be a success. Until the first post operative check your dog should be confined in a small area (eg laundry) and taken out to the toilet on a lead only, carry your pet down any stairs or steep slopes. There must be NO running, chasing balls or jumping on and off things for at least 6 weeks.

1st Post operative check (after 3-4 days) _____

After the 1st Post-Operative Check-Up:

- * At the 1st post-operative check the surgeon will instruct you on some basic **physiotherapy** exercises. These should be done 2-3 times a day, but discontinued if there is any discomfort.
- * After the 1st post-operative check the surgeon may allow a small increase in the area in which your pet can be confined, but definitely still no running, jumping, walks or games.

Suture Removal (14 days) _____

After the Sutures Are Removed:

- * It is important to start activity soon after the suture removal to limit muscle wastage and to help the animal gain confidence in the leg again. Often, after an animal has limped for a long time they quickly learn not to use the painful leg and are then reluctant to try using it again.
- * After the sutures are removed, short leash walks can usually be commenced. At first start by just walking past a few houses on the street then back again. Gradually increase to around the block, then around two blocks. Don't take the dog walking unless it is bearing at least some weight on the leg (to avoid over using the good leg). Take things very slowly and don't "overdo it". Walking once or twice a day will help to build up a steady, gradual increase.
- * The surgeon will check the leg and assess the dog's progress a few more times during the rehabilitation period to ensure it is progressing properly and advise on activity levels.