

Post-Operative Tibial Crest Avulsion Stabilization Instructions

PLEASE NOTE - These instructions are rather generic and intended to provide caregivers an idea of what is expected following this procedure. Actual instructions may vary considerably depending upon the nature of the fracture and the nature of the patient.

Activity Limitation:

Limit activity to brief leash walks for urination and defecation until the bone is healed based on radiographs (x-rays). Limit walks to 5-10 minutes 2-4 times daily. Supporting with a towel or other such sling under the belly and in front of the legs may be necessary when going across slick floors or up and down stairs. When in doubt, less activity is better than more.

Range-of-Motion Exercises:

Beginning on the morning following surgery, apply a cold compress (e.g. a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel) to the operated stifle (knee) for approximately 3-5 minutes if the patient will tolerate it. Remove the cold compress. Gently tickle the toes thus causing the patient to pull the leg up as far as is tolerable. Initially, this will not be very far. Hold the paw at that extreme for 5-10 seconds and then allow the leg to extend and relax for 5-10 seconds. That is one repetition. Perform 10-15 repetitions 3-4 times daily. For the first 2-4 days post-operatively, apply cold compresses for 3-5 minutes before and after the exercise sessions. Thereafter, apply a warm compress (moist towel heated in a microwave oven) before and after the exercises.

Please keep in mind that the goal is to achieve a nearly complete range of motion by skin suture removal (10-14 days post-operatively). Do not try to accomplish this in one or two days. Go slowly. Take "baby" steps.

Incisional Care:

Monitor the incision for discharge such as blood, serum or pus. If noted, please call your veterinarian.

Barring complications, return to your veterinarian 10-14 days post-operatively to assess progress and remove skin sutures or skin staples.

Implant Removal:

Arrangements should be made for the patient to return to your veterinarian in 3-4 weeks. At that time, radiographs will be taken to assess the healing and the implants (pins and wire) will most likely be removed. Implant removal is based upon appropriate healing. Implants should be removed in order to minimize the impact on the growth potential of physis (growth plate) of the tibial crest. There will be additional charges incurred for this procedure and it should be scheduled through your veterinarian.