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## **Post-operative instructions for Orthopaedic procedures**

### **Medications**

Antibiotics, pain relief and other medications may be dispensed. Please follow the corresponding labels accordingly.

### **Bandages**

If used, bandages will need to be kept dry. If the bandage become wet, it will need to be immediately removed. Generally, they should be removed **3 to 5 days** after surgery. We recommend making an appointment to have the bandage removed by a veterinarian or veterinary nurse. There is no charge for bandage removal (unless re-banding associated with specific cases is necessary).

### **Suture Removal**

Sutures need to be removed **14 days** after surgery. Sutures need to be kept clean and dry. An **elizabethan collar** is recommended to prevent chewing of sutures and contamination of the surgical site. A **bitterant spray** is available as an alternative if a collar is not suitable.

### **Confinement**

Your pet should be confined to either a cage or a small room/enclosure for approximately **2 months** (unless a specific time frame is given by the vet). The pet can be taken out of their enclosure only under supervision (including periods of post-operative exercise outlined below) and must be kept controlled at all times. We recommend keeping a lead on whenever they are not confined.

### **Post-Operative Exercise**

For the **initial 2 weeks**, strict rest is required with very short walks out to toilet, **on a lead**, several times a day. **After 2 weeks**, we recommend starting lead walks, initially 10min for the 1<sup>st</sup> week, 15min for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, 20min for the 3<sup>rd</sup> week, and so on, gradually increasing until 2 months post operatively. There should be **No off-lead activity** for the entire two months with running and jumping avoided. Stairs usage should be minimised and always on a lead. Gradually reintroduce stairs and hills as lead walks are increased.

### **Physiotherapy**

We can now offer a **customised physiotherapy service** to maximise your pets recovery. **Dr Lindy Price** is a rehabilitation practitioner and veterinary surgeon who can offer a structured program to strengthen and return your pet to its normal activity levels. For appointment times and costs please discuss with the discharging veterinarian or reception staff.

**Cold compresses** can be placed on the site of the surgery/injury for 20min up to 3 times daily. This should be started immediately post-surgery (or after bandage removal) and continued for up to 10 days. Gentle **massage** and **range of movement exercises** (flexing and extending all the joints in the affected limb) can be performed up to 3 times daily, starting 3 days after surgery or when bandages are removed. **Swimming** can be started from 4 weeks after surgery, 5-10min twice weekly is recommended. Avoid running in sand, as this can exacerbate arthritis and puts excessive strain on healing limbs.

### **Follow Up Radiographs**

Radiographs are generally taken at 6-8 weeks post operatively if required.