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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-bandaging 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 1st week, 15min for the 2nd week, 20min for the 3rd 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.