

Surgery: Fracture repair of a distal femoral fracture (xxx side)

Prognosis: Your pet has a good chance to make a full recovery.

Convalescent period: Weight bearing is typically seen within the first week after surgery. By 2 months after the surgery the lameness should be mild or have resolved. Please give us a call if your companion stops using the operated limb.

Diet: If your companion will not eat the regular diet, a home-made bland diet (50:50 mix of lean hamburger, chicken breast, lean turkey meat and a carbohydrate source such as rice, potato, or pasta) should be offered for 3 days and then wean back onto the regular diet over the next three days.

Bowel movements: Your companion may not have a bowel movement for the next 4 days after surgery. If your companion does not have a bowel movement after 4 days or is straining to defecate, constipation may be present. Unflavored Metamucil or Miralax at a dose of 1 teaspoon per 50lbs body weight can be mixed in canned food (in each meal) as a laxative. If this treatment is not effective, other laxatives can be prescribed.

Exercise:

1. Cover all slippery floors with throw rugs or indoor/outdoor turf carpet for the first 8 weeks after surgery.
2. Limit activity to very short leash walks for bowel and urinary purposes until the bone is healed (typically 2 months). Do not leave your companion off the leash for 2 months. No jumping, climbing stairs or rough-housing with other pets or people. Strenuous activity may result in failure of the surgical implants to hold the fracture together.

Rehabilitation therapy:

1. Cold compresses should be applied to the surgical incision and no range of motion exercises should be done.
2. Passive range of motion (PROM) exercises should be started on the 4th day after surgery. This is done by flexing and extending the hip, knee and ankle of the operated limb three sessions daily for five minutes each time (do this after each warm packing session). When flexing the knee, the tip of the heel should be able to touch the rump. Continue range of motion exercises for three weeks or until your companion is walking well on the limb and you have achieved normal range of motion of the knee.

Incision:

1. When the incision is exposed, daily, check the incision for signs of infection: redness, swelling, pain or discharge.
2. Do not allow licking of the incision as this could cause an infection or open the incision. An Elizabethan collar obtained from us or a pet store, should be kept on your companion for 2 weeks to prevent licking of the incision.

Follow-up examinations:

1. The first appointment at 2 weeks after surgery will be Telemedicine. Please send us a photo of the incision and a video of your pet walking. Please send these to your pet's surgeon's email or cell phone number.

2. Radiographs (x-ray) of the repaired fracture site should be done in 8 weeks to check the healing process. Please fast your pet starting at 10 PM, the night before the appointment, as sedation may be needed. Please set up this appointment today, as we have a very busy outpatient schedule.

IV catheter bandage: Your companion had an intravenous catheter for the administration of IV fluids during anesthesia. The catheter has been removed and a small bandage has been placed over the site (typically on the lower part of a front or hind limb) to prevent bleeding. Please remove this bandage when you arrive home.

Medications: A pain management protocol has been prescribed which should be very effective. If your pet seems to be uncomfortable (whining, restless), the most common cause for this is that your pet needs to urinate. Take your pet outdoors to eliminate. If your pet still seems painful, please give us a call.

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