

Discharge Instructions for Fracture Repair

Surgery: fracture repair of the _____ bone

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 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 50 lbs body weight can be mixed in canned food (in each meal) as a laxative. If this treatment is not effective, please give us a call.

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 found to be healed on x-rays. Do not leave your companion off the leash until the bone is completely healed. 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. When the bandage is on the limb no compresses should be applied to the area and no range of motion exercises should be done.
2. Range of motion exercises should be started as soon as your companion will allow it (typically when the bandage is removed). This is done by flexing and extending the joints above and below the fractured bone three sessions daily for five minutes each time (do this after each warm packing session). Continue range of motion exercises for three weeks or until your companion is walking well on the limb.

Bandage:

1. This will support the limb during the healing process. We estimate that the limb will need to be supported for a total of _____ weeks.
2. Please check the toes for swelling, and coldness. Please call us if any problems are noted.

Incision:

1. When the incision is exposed, daily, check the incision(s) 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. Please make a telemedicine evaluation with your pet's surgeon in 2 weeks. Please send a photo of the incision and a video of your dog walking via text message to your surgeon or via email to scheduler.asc@gmail.com
2. Please make an appointment for in house examination at ASCM and radiographs (x-ray) of the operated limb in _____ weeks to check the healing process.

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.

Implant removal: The implants can be removed in _____ months after surgery. The reasons to remove the plate include lameness associated with cold weather, uncommon but potential risk of metal implants inducing bone cancer, and osteoporosis (weakening) of the bone beneath the plate. Many times, we do not recommend removal of the metal, as it may not benefit your pet.

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.

Typical postop medication protocol prescribed at ASCM includes:

1. Nocita is a local anesthetic that is injected into the operated tissues at the time of surgery and provides pain relief for about 72 hours.
2. NSAID for 5 to 10 days. Do not extend the duration of this prescription beyond this time, as it may slow the healing of the bone. Examples of NSAID includes carprofen, meloxicam, deracoxib, and others
3. Antibiotic for 5 days. We commonly prescribe cephalexin.
4. Tramadol to control pain – it is not a very strong pain killer in dogs, but does seem to some effect.
5. Sedatives to help control your pet's activity in the postop period. Trazodone is a mild sedative. Acepromazine is a stronger sedative.