

Surgery: Partial tarsal arthrodesis to treat hyperextension injury with severe ligament injury

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 about 3 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 pet will not eat their regular diet, an Intestinal diet such as Eukanuba Low Residue or Hill's I/d diet or 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 their regular diet over the next three days.

Bowel movements: Your pet 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 xxx teaspoon 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 for 3 months. Do not leave your companion off the leash for 3 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 dislocated joints together.

Cast/splint with bandage:

1. The cast/splint will support the limb during the healing process. We estimate that the limb will need to be supported for a total of 8 weeks.
2. Warning signs that there could be a problem with the paw:
 - a. Swelling of toes - Please check the toes for swelling; **if there is swelling the two middle toe nails will no longer touch each other.**
 - b. Poor circulation to the paw - Put your pinky finger in the end of the cast and **check the toes for coldness.**
 - c. Pressure sores - **excessive attention paid to the cast by your pet, chewing at a certain are of the cast or increasing lameness.**
 - d. Loosening of the cast - Excessive activity will **loosen the cast** and increase the risk of developing pressure or rub sores.
 - d. Infection - **discharge weeps through the cast** or the **cast has a foul odor**
3. Frequency of cast changes: The first cast change should be completed in xxx weeks. Thereafter the frequency of cast changes should be completed every 1 to 2 weeks. If the cast becomes soiled or wet, please return to us or &&RDVMSALUTATION for a cast change as soon as possible; a wet or soiled cast will cause an infection which is painful.

Incision:

1. The incision will not be exposed as the paw will be in a cast. When the cast is changed by a veterinarian, the incision will be checked for signs of infection.
2. After the limb is no longer supporter by a cast/splint/bandage, please make sure that your pet does not obsessively lick or chew the incision/surgical site. If needed, an Elizabethan collar can be used to protect the area.

Follow-up examinations:

1. Please make an appointment for a recheck with your pet's surgeon or your primary care veterinarian in 1 to 2 weeks (surgeons decision) for an evaluation and cast change.
2. Radiographs (x-ray) of the operated limb may be recommended in 8 weeks to check the healing process. This should be done by your pet's surgeon.

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 are uncommonly removed in most patients. Metal implants will only be removed if the surgical site develops a chronic infection that cannot be completely cleared with antibiotics; however, the bone also must be healed before implants can be removed. The implants also will be removed if they cause irritation and lameness.

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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.