

## **Discharge Instructions for Patellar Luxation Postop in Cats**

**Surgery:** Surgical correction of medial patellar luxation (right knee)

**Prognosis:** About 90% of patients receiving this type of surgery will have a good outcome. Arthritis may cause residual stiffness, but you should contact us if this is seen after full healing has taken place (about four months).

**Convalescent period:** Weight bearing is typically seen within the first week after surgery. By two weeks after surgery most cats bear a moderate amount of weight on the operated limb when walking. By two to four months after the surgery the lameness should have resolved. Please give us a call if your companion is not convalescing in this manner on the operated limb.

**Diet:** Feed your pet the regular diet. If your pet will not eat the regular diet, a highly palatable food such as Gerber chicken or beef baby food, or canned tuna should be offered for 3 days and then wean back onto the regular diet over the next three days.

**Bowel movements:** Please provide a litter pan that has a low entry. 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. Miralax at a dose of 1/4 of a teaspoon can be mixed in canned food (in each meal) as a laxative. If this treatment is not effective, other laxatives can be prescribed by us.

### **Exercise:**

Limit activity to a small room that has no elevated surfaces for jumping or a large cage with a cat litter/food/water in the cage for 8 weeks.

Note: Strenuous activity may result in failure of a successful surgery. **No jumping, climbing stairs or rough-housing with other pets or people.**

### **Rehabilitation therapy**

NOTE: some cats will not cooperate to have rehabilitation therapy and you may not be able to conduct the following rehabilitation program.

1. First 3 days after surgery: Apply a cold compress (frozen peas, frozen corn or a cold gel pack) to the operated knee three times daily, twenty minutes each time for the next three days. Place a thin towel between the cold compress and the knee for patient comfort.

2. Day 4 to day 14: Apply a warm compress (warm water bottle or microwaved raw rice in a cloth bag) to the knee three times daily, ten

minutes each time. Monitor the temperature of the compress so that it does not burn the skin. Place a thin towel between the warm compress and the knee for patient comfort. Range of motion exercises should be started on the 4th day after surgery and should be done after application of the warm compress. Range of motion exercises are done by flexing and extending the knee joint three sessions daily for five minutes each. The goal is to flex the knee so that the tip of the hock (heel) will touch the rump and straighten the knee out completely. After the range of motion exercises, apply a cold compress to the knee for five minutes.

3. Day 14 to the 8th week postop: Continue range of motion exercises, as described above 5 minutes (or about 20 repetitions) for 6 weeks. Continue to Keep Clyde in a confined area as above. We also recommend rehabilitation therapy at a rehabilitation center of your primary care vet's choice, which can start in 2 weeks after surgery.

4. Week 9 to 12 postop: Range of motion exercises can be discontinued. Clyde may be allowed to roam in the house. Do not allow your him outdoors. Climbing stairs and jumping on elevated surfaces (2 feet or less) is permitted.

Incision: Daily, check the incision for signs of infection: redness, swelling, pain or discharge. Swelling of the lower part of the limb (hock) is common and will resolve within 7 to 10 days. Do not allow licking of the incision as this could cause an infection or open the incision. An Elizabethan collar should be kept on your companion for 2 weeks after surgery to prevent licking of the incision. If present, the bandage covering the incision should be removed 1 day after surgery.

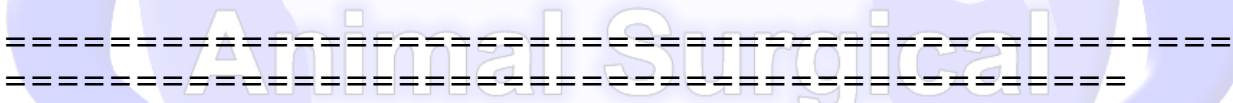
**Follow-up examinations:**

1. At 2 weeks after surgery, please text a photo of the incision and a short video clip of Clyde walking. Please send these to your surgeon's cell number or send to the email address provided to you.
2. A final evaluation should be done in 8 weeks with Dr. Degner to check the healing process. This will be an appointment at our hospital, with curbside admission.

**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.

**Long-term management of osteoarthritis:** All cats that have surgical correction of patellar luxation have or will develop some degree of osteoarthritis in the operated knee. Some cats may need to have additional treatments for osteoarthritis. Recommendations to control signs of osteoarthritis may include:

- 1. Weight management: Your companion should be maintained in trim body condition for the remainder of his/her life.
- 2. **For now continue on your pet’s regular diet; however, a prescription diet may be needed if residual lameness is present.** Diet with high levels of omega fatty acids: Hill's J/d diet or other similar prescription diet may be recommended if signs of arthritis are noted after the healing period is complete. It is important to wean your pet onto this diet over a period of 2 weeks to prevent excess flatulence and/or diarrhea. Note: if your companion has food allergies do not change the to this diet without prior consultation by your primary care veterinarian. Another option is to add omega fatty acids to your companion's existing food in the form of Welactin. Please obtain this supplement from your primary care veterinarian.
- 3. Nutraceuticals: Dasuquin is a high quality, very pure form of chondroitin sulfate and glucosamine that is readily absorbed by the intestines in dogs. In addition, it contains avocado/soybean unsaponifiables (ASU), which are natural anti-oxidants that help alleviate signs of arthritis. Please obtain this supplement from your primary care veterinarian.
- 4. If your pet has persistent lameness beyond 4 months after surgery, your pet should be seen by one of our orthopedic surgeons.



**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 (make sure that the sling is removed once upon arriving to the area for elimination). If your pet still seems painful, please give us a call.

**TYPICAL PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS:**

- 1. Nocita – local anesthetic that numbs the area for 3 days
- 2. Buprenorphine transmucosal for 2 days
- 3. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory for 3 days

#### 4. Antibiotic injection

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