

Discharge Instructions for Patellar Luxation Correction

Surgery: Correction of Luxating Patella

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 dogs are bearing a moderate amount of weight on the operated limb. By 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: If your companion will not eat the regular diet, a homemade 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. Miralax at a dose of 1 teaspoon per 50 pounds of 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 by us or your primary care veterinarian.

Exercise: Use a sling that is placed under the abdomen when walking outdoors for support during the first two weeks after surgery; a bath towel can be used in place of the sling. Remove the sling once you are outdoors so that your companion will be able to urinate. Cover all slippery floors with throw rugs or indoor/outdoor turf carpet for the first 8 weeks after surgery. Do not leave your companion off the leash for 3 months. No jumping, climbing stairs or roughhousing with other pets or people. Strenuous activity may prevent a full recovery. During the third month, exercise can be gradually increased (on a leash).

Rehabilitation therapy

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: The following should be completed three times daily:
Apply a warm compress (warm water bottle or microwaved raw rice in a cloth bag) to the knee for ten minutes. 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. Next, put the knee through passive range of motion exercises. Range of motion exercises are done by flexing and extending the knee joint three sessions daily for 20 repetitions. 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 completing the range of motion exercises, apply a cold compress wrapped in a thin towel to the knee for five minutes.

3. Day 14 to the 8th week postop: As long as &&PTNAME is bearing a moderate amount of weight on the limb, leash walks are permitted. Ten-minute walks three times daily are permitted. Continue range of motion exercises, as described above 5 minutes (or about 20 repetitions) for 6 weeks. At this time the warm and cold compresses are no longer needed. We

also recommend rehabilitation therapy at a rehabilitation center of your primary care veterinarian's choice, which can start in 2 weeks after surgery.

4. Week 9 to 12 postop: Range of motion exercises can be discontinued. Leash walks should be gradually increased to a normal duration (start with 15 minutes three times daily and gradually work up from there). Climbing stairs and jumping on elevated surfaces (2 feet or less) is permitted.

Incision: If a band aid is covering the incision, it should be removed tomorrow. 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.

Follow-up examinations:

1. For the 2 week recheck, a telemedicine evaluation will be made. Please send a photo of the incision and a video of your pet walking to your pet's surgeon via email or text message to the surgeon's cell phone. If all is going well, follow the instructions as above
2. Please make an appointment for an evaluation 8 weeks post surgery with Dr. &&DVMATTLN to check the healing process. This will be a curbside admission of the patient for a direct evaluation by the 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.

Long-term management of osteoarthritis: All dogs that have a luxating patellas and surgery have or will develop some degree of osteoarthritis in the operated knee. Some dogs may need to have additional treatments for osteoarthritis. Recommendations to control signs of osteoarthritis may include:

1. Weight management: Your pet should have a trim body condition which means the ribs should have only a light coat of flesh and the waist should have a nicely tucked appearance.
2. For now, please continue giving your pet the regular diet. If signs of arthritis are seen after 3 to 4 months postop, a prescription diet with high levels of omega fatty acids may be recommended. One such diet is called Hill's Mobility. 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.

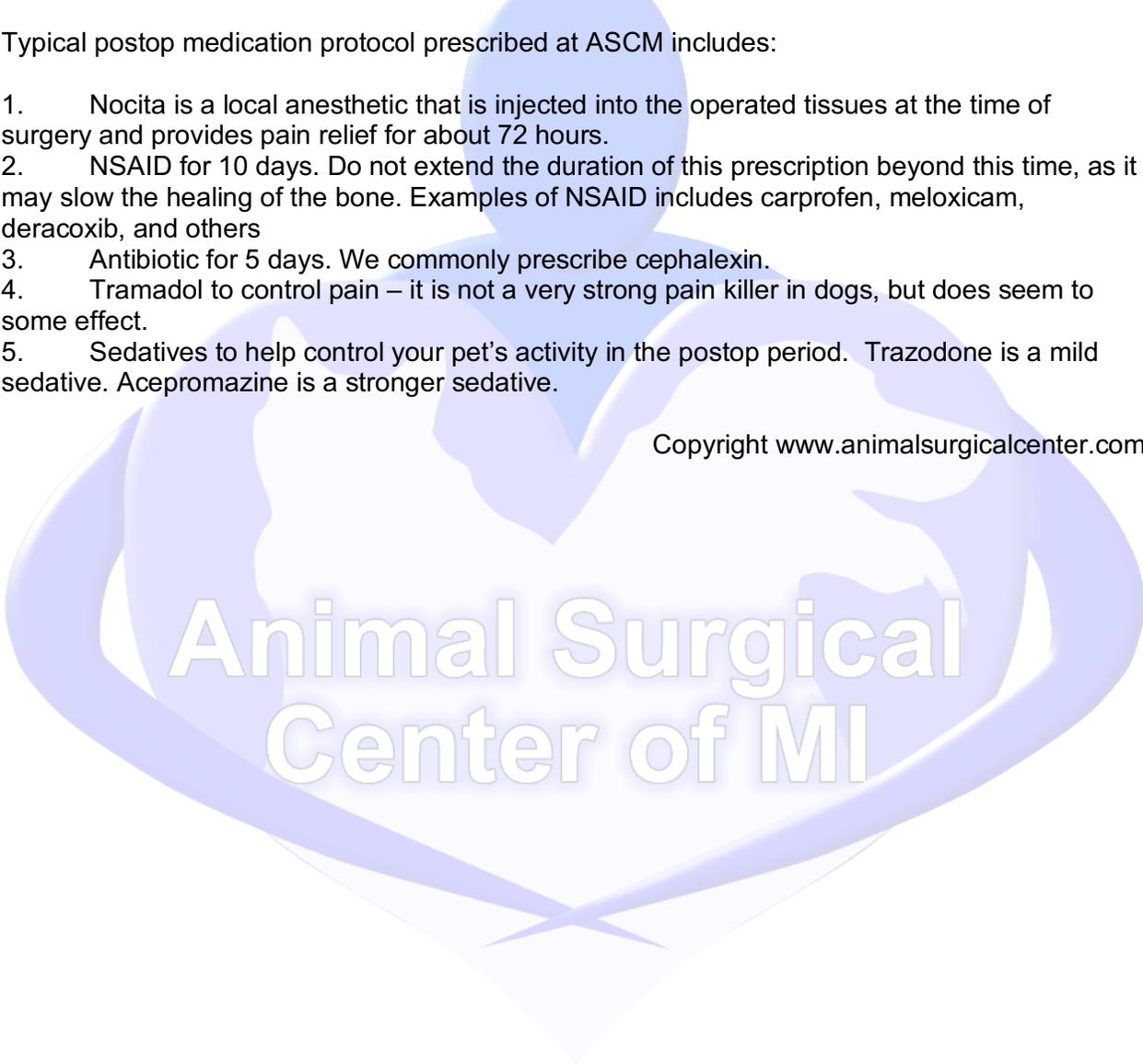
3. Nutraceuticals: Dasuquin is a high quality, very pure form of chondroitin sulfate and glucosamine that is readily absorbed by the intestines in dogs. In addition, it contains avocado/soybean unsaponifiables (ASU), which are natural anti-oxidants that help alleviate signs of arthritis. Please obtain this supplement from your primary care veterinarian.
4. Pain management: Intermittent use of a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory may be needed during periods of soreness due to changes in the weather or high activity. If needed please obtain this medication from your primary care veterinarian.
5. Exercise: Maintaining good muscle mass and range of motion of the operated knee is important for improved long-term function. Daily walks, swimming, incline walking and regular activity are recommended after all exercise restrictions have been lifted.
6. If your pet has persistent lameness beyond 4 months after surgery, your pet should be seen by one of our orthopedic surgeons.

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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 or postop anesthesia delirium with will its way out of the body overnight. 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 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 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.

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