

Home Care Information: Implant removal

Your pet has had all or some of the metal implants removed from the bone. When these implants are removed or reduced, the healing fracture site will be under more stress. This is another time period when activity must be reduced to minimize the load on the bone. The holes that remain after implant removal are weak spots and need time to fill in before the bone is strong enough for normal activity.

ACTIVITY RESTRICTION x 4 weeks

Please keep your pet in a comfortable, safe indoor location with no free access to stairs for the next 24-48 hours as he/she recovers from anesthesia or sedation. Your pet may whine or appear more anxious than usual; this may indicate pain/discomfort or side-effects of the medications. Please call your veterinarian for assistance with medication adjustments or return for exam & additional pain medications as needed.

Confine your pet to one level/section of the house on carpeted floors. Use baby gates, etc. to prevent access to slippery floors or stairs. Do not allow jumping on/off furniture. Confine to a small area/room/crate when unattended. Please do not allow any playing, running, jumping. For dogs, use a short leash when going outside to urinate/defecate.

Your pet should resume using the leg to the same level as before implant removal in 2-3 days. Thereafter, leg use should continue to improve. If he/she suddenly deteriorates or does not appear to be progressing well enough, please return to your veterinarian for exam; x-rays may be needed to diagnose the problem.

Your pet will feel like fully using the leg before the bone is healed. Please continue restrictions during this difficult time when he/she is feeling "too" well! Failure to do so may cause serious healing problems.

BANDAGE CARE

A bandage *may have been* applied to the operated limb. The goal of the bandage is to provide pressure to the surgical site to minimize swelling and improve patient comfort for the first few days. Please place a plastic baggy over the foot whenever you take your pet outside to prevent soiling of the bandage; remove when indoors. You may remove the bandage in 2-3 days. If the bandage slips below the incision or becomes soiled or wet *before this time*, please remove it by simply cutting away one layer at a time (use caution, avoid skin); no need to replace.

PROGRESS EXAMS

Return to your veterinarian in 10-14 days for a progress exam and suture removal. Skin healing and leg function will be evaluated, and additional x-rays will be taken if needed.

Swimming is wonderful rehabilitation exercise (for some dogs) when performed correctly. You may allow controlled swimming after skin incisions heal 10-14d. Controlled swimming requires that your pet not jump or leap into the water; walking into the water until it is deep enough to swim is required. Throwing balls to fetch often results in sudden jumping and lunging, which can cause serious problems in the healing phase. Do not over extend your pet; start with short excursions (5 minutes) and increase duration and frequency gradually.

LONG TERM LIFESTYLE

After the fracture is fully healed, there are no restrictions on activities for your pet. A gradual return to full function should occur, to allow for a smooth return of muscle function and strength following the restricted.