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Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy (TPLO) Instructions

Activity

For 8 to 12 weeks your dog will need to have their activity restricted. This means that they should only be taken out for short, controlled leash walks for about 5 to 10 minutes, 3 to 4 times a day. We will gradually increase their activity after each two-week recheck exam if all is going well.

They may need sling support during these walks, especially crossing slippery surfaces and stairs. The sling is intended to be a safety net in case they slip or fall. You should not be carrying them with the sling.

Your dog should not be allowed to run, jump, or play with other animals during this time. They should also be confined to a crate or small room (6'x6') when unsupervised and should not be allowed access to areas with slick floors or stairs. They should not be allowed to return to normal activity until they are given the OK by the doctor.

- During confinement, their food intake will need to be reduced by at least 10% to help prevent weight gain. Most dogs will maintain their current weight if their food intake is reduced during the recovery time. We can judge this based on their weight at recheck exams. Water consumption should remain normal.
- One of the most difficult aspects of confinement is that frequently, your dog will feel better long before they have healed. At this point they will start being more careless of the operated limb and will then be more likely to be overactive and injure themselves. Until the bone is healed, you must adhere strictly to the confinement guidelines and not allow them to do more.

Incision Care

Please monitor the incision twice daily over the next 10 to 14 days for the following:

- Bleeding: A few drops of dried blood is typical after surgery. However, if there is continuous bleeding from the incision, this is not normal and you should contact our office ASAP.
- Swelling/Redness: Swelling and minor redness or bruising is typical after surgery. However, it should not get worse more than 3 days after being released from the hospital or spread significantly beyond the surgical site.
- Discharge: If you notice any abnormal or discolored discharge coming from the incision site, please contact us immediately.
- Dehiscence: This is when the edges of the incision begin to separate. If you notice the incision beginning to open up, contact our office immediately.
- Pain: Minor discomfort is normal after surgery. However, you should be able to gently touch the area around the incision without a reaction. If it seems painful, they may not be getting enough analgesics or this could be a sign of infection if excess swelling and redness are also present.

Elizabethan Collar

Please see separate instructions. They should be wearing this collar at ALL times if they are wearing one at the time of release from our hospital. This will prevent them from licking, chewing, or scratching at the incision site. If you notice that they will not eat or drink with the collar on, you may remove it during eating and drinking times as long as they are supervised. The collar should be replaced immediately after.

Cold Compress

For the first 5 days after surgery, cold compresses (ice packs) should be applied to the surgical area 3 to 4 times daily for 5 to 10 minutes to help reduce swelling and make them more comfortable. Using a bag of frozen peas (or similar cold pack) wrapped in a thin, clean, and dry towel works well when applied over the surgical area. Some patients do not tolerate this well. If you are having a lot of difficulty while trying to apply ice packs, stop and give us a call.

Physical Therapy

Please see separate instructions. We began this therapy today and will instruct you on what to continue at home.

Please check out the video "ESO TPLO rehab" on YouTube.

*If at any time during their recovery and healing your dog does anything that causes them to cry out or give a sharp yelp, contact Edinger Surgical Options. If they have a setback or decrease in function, contact Edinger Surgical Options.

*It is imperative that you inform us at once if they do something that is potentially harmful to the surgery. If something has occurred which jeopardizes the outcome of the surgery, it is usually less difficult to correct if caught right away, which leads to a better outcome for them.

If there are any signs of general illness including vomiting, depression, fever, refusal to eat, or if any questions or concerns arise, please do not hesitate to call our office.

Medication

They will be sent home with an oral analgesic.

Prognosis

Their prognosis for a return to normal function is good. The knee is now stable and they should gradually begin using the limb over the next 3 to 5 days. During the second month of healing, leg use will continue to improve and muscles will strengthen.

It is very important that they be adequately confined and restricted to allow healing of the operated joint. Excessive activity may result in failure of the stabilization and possibly result in the need for additional surgery.

Rechecks

Please schedule the first recheck exam for 10 to 14 days post-op. Additionally schedule recheck exams at 4 weeks (brief), at 6 weeks (sedation and radiographs) and at 4 months. We also recommend that you return annually from the date of surgery for a stifle exam and radiographs.

There will be additional charges for all future radiographs along with sedation if necessary.

The staff at Edinger Surgical Options appreciated the opportunity to assist you and your family veterinarian with your dog's health care needs. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at any time.