



Post-Operative Instructions: Patella Luxation

Thank you for trusting your pet to our surgical care. Your pet has had general anesthesia and surgery for the correction of a luxating patella (movable kneecap). This involves correction of patella to restore stability and function. It is essential to allow your pet time to heal and to avoid re-injury during recuperation.

Please strictly follow the instructions below.

1. Activity:

- No running, jumping, free access to stairs, or rough playing with other pets or children.
- Do not allow any unrestricted or off-leash activity, or free access to stairs or slippery floors.
- Restrict activity for the next 6 weeks to allow complete healing of the surgical site.
- Activity must be limited to very short leash walks three times daily solely for going to the bathroom.
- Confine your pet to an enclosed area such as a small room, dog run or dog crate. After the 6-week recheck, you may gradually return your pet to full activity.

2. Incision:

- Please gently remove white bandage in 1 day
- Monitor the incision daily for signs of infection such as increased redness, swelling or discharge. If you observe any of these signs or if the surgical site suddenly becomes painful to the touch, please call us immediately. Ice the incision two to three times for 10-15 minutes daily to help prevent bruising and swelling.
- Your pet must wear an E-collar until the sutures are removed as licking can provide a source of infection.
- Keep the incision clean and dry (do not apply anything to the incision). No bathing or swimming for 14 days.

3. Medications:

- Give all medications as directed and call us if you believe your pet is having an adverse reaction to any of the prescriptions.
- If your pet loses appetite, begins vomiting or develops diarrhea or dark/tarry stools please call us immediately.
- We may prescribe sedatives for your pet's safety and to assist you in enforcing exercise restriction. It is important to note that most pets will begin to use the affected limb within 2 weeks of surgery (notify us if your pet does not!) but you must continue to enforce the exercise restriction. Explosive, off-leash behavior can be devastating to the recovery process. Your pet could re-injure or tear the joint and undo the surgery.

4. Food:

- Your pet should always have access to water and eat 1/3 less of their normal diet during recovery.



5. Recovery:

- Your pet should show steady, continual improvement. If your pet seems lethargic, acutely painful, or simply not doing well please call us immediately.
- **Common side-effects of general anesthesia include constipation, decreased urine output, decreased appetite and/or thirst. Increased vocalization due to disorientation, a lack of coordination, and drowsiness is also possible.** Your pet may experience some or all of these side effects. These effects pass relatively quickly, and your pet should appear at least mostly normal to you within the next 24-72 hours after surgery.
- Your pet should progressively improve the ability to walk on the operated limb. Many patients will not walk on the limb initially but begin to walk on it over the next several weeks. If your pet is not touching the leg down and using it within 10 days of surgery, please call us.

6. Recheck:

- Please schedule an appointment for suture removal 10-14 days after surgery

7. Questions:

- Our foremost interest is your pet's rapid and complete recovery: Please do not hesitate to call VOC at 219.922.6000 if you have any questions or concerns.

****In case of an emergency call North Central ER at (219)881-1600, or your closest emergency clinic.**

We offer this information as a complement to the specific verbal and written instructions that our staff may have discussed with you during consultation or your discharge appointment. It is intended to provide helpful guidelines for caring for your pet at home and is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all possible post-surgical orders or potential complications. As always, we rely on you to call if you have any questions or concerns regarding your pet's recovery and post-operative care.

