

# Home Care for Post Cruciate Surgery

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## **ACTIVITY RESTRICTION:**

- Following surgery, REST is the most important factor in recovery.
- When unsupervised, we recommend confinement to a crate or small room for the first 8 weeks following surgery.
- When on slippery surfaces or stairs, a sling may be used to prevent trauma from falling.
- Please use a short, hand-held leash when taking your pet outside to use the washroom.
- Absolutely NO RUNNING, JUMPING, playing with other dogs, or free access to stairs is allowed.

Failure to adequately restrict exercise during the healing period may result in implant failure and additional surgery, discomfort and expense.

## **INCISION CARE:**

- Please check the incision site for signs of redness, swelling, discharge, or separation of the skin edges. If you have any concerns please contact us or your regular veterinarian.
- Do not allow your pet to lick or chew at the incision. If necessary, please use an E-Collar.

## **RECHECK EXAMINATIONS:**

- Please make an appointment for 7-10 days for assessment of knee function and incision healing.
- Please make an appointment with the Baddeck Veterinary Clinic at 4 and 8 weeks after surgery for rechecks.

## **DIET:**

- Please discuss diet options with your veterinarian.

## Physical Therapy regimen:

### WEEK 1:

Apply a warm compress (damp towel warmed in water or a magic bag) to the knee for 10 minutes prior to range of motion (ROM) exercises three times a day.

ROM exercises: Have your pet lie on his/her good side. Grip the front of the thigh with one hand and hold the foot with the other. Slowly push the foot up to flex the knee, and then slowly pull the foot and push the thigh to extend the knee. **DO NOT** go past the point of comfort. REPEAT 20 times.

Following ROM exercises, apply a cold compress (bag of peas in a towel) to the knee for 10 minutes to reduce the swelling associated with the exercises.

Slow leash walks to use the washroom are acceptable.

### WEEKS 2 and 3:

Apply the warm compress and perform ROM exercises as described above. Now flex the knee and hold for 10 seconds, then extend the knee and hold for 10 seconds. Do not go past the point of comfort.

Concentrate on extension of the knee. Repeat 10 times, three times a day. Apply a cold pack for 5-10 minutes.

Start SLOW leash walks for 5 minutes twice daily.

### WEEKS 4-5:

Sit/stand exercises: Have your pet sit and stand for 10 repetitions twice daily. Use small treats to encourage participation. Do not push down on his/her rump.

Continue with the ROM exercises three times a day.

Start deep massage of the thigh and calf muscles three times a day for 5 minutes.

Increase the duration of the SLOW leash walks to 10 minutes 2-3 times a day.

Swimming may be started. Walking in shallow water is also an excellent exercise.

### WEEKS 6 and 7:

Continue with sit/stand exercises, ROM exercises and massage.

Increase the duration of the SLOW leash walks to 20 minutes 2-3 times a day.

Make an appointment for recheck.

### WEEKS 8-10:

Continue with sit/stand and ROM exercises.

Increase the duration of the SLOW leash walks to 30 minutes 2-3 times a day.

**Physical Therapy regimen (continued):**

**WEEKS 11 and 12:**

Increase the duration of the leash walks to 40 minutes 2-3 times a day.

Jogging exercises: on a SHORT leash, intermittently jog and walk your dog for 10 minutes twice daily.

Light play: On a LONG leash, encourage playing and tugging of toys for 15 minutes twice daily.

Healing should be complete and your dog can return to full activity by the 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> week. The lameness should gradually improve with time.

If you have any concerns, please call (902)295-3440