

## Cruciate Repair Discharge Instructions

Thank you for bringing your pet to Howard County Veterinary Service, P.C. Your pet has just been spayed. As you know, your dog had a cranial cruciate ligament (ACL) rupture, which has been surgically repaired. The cranial cruciate ligament is the main ligament stabilizing the knee joint. It connects the femur (thigh bone) to the tibia (shin bone), and it prevents the lower leg from moving forward. The following are discharge instructions for the optimal recovery of your pet.

Surgery: Because your dog's cranial cruciate ligament is no longer able to stabilize the knee, your pet's knee has been surgically stabilized to prevent the tibia (shin bone) from moving forward. Surgical-grade stainless steel wire is currently stabilizing your pet's knee joint. Scar tissue will eventually form around the wire to further stabilize the joint. However, activity restriction is very important for the next 4 weeks before the scar tissue sets in. Please follow the activity restrictions below.

Activity: Please keep indoors or closely confined for the next 4 weeks so the incision can stay clean and dry. Strict cage/kennel confinement is ideal for these patients until scar tissue is able to form to reinforce the wire. No jumping, running, or rough play for 4 weeks. Also avoid climbing stairs or slippery floors. Brief leash walks only are recommended. You may use a towel as a sling to support the hind end and avoid excessive weight-bearing on the leg. After 4 weeks, your pet can slowly return to normal activity. Excessive activity before 4 weeks after surgery can cause the stainless steel wire that is stabilizing the knee to snap. This could lead to additional expense to you and added discomfort to your pet.

Anesthesia: When your pet is discharged, they may still be groggy from the anesthesia. They may appear depressed, wobbly and may tremble. Your pet should be allowed to recover in a quiet room at home away from other pets. Check on their progress intermittently.

Food/Water: First offer only small amounts of water, and if they seems alert and hungry, offer small amounts of food (~ 1/3 of usual meal). Every pet recovers differently. Some pets may not want anything at all the first night. If your pet vomits, withhold food until the next morning. Call our office immediately if vomiting persists. By the next morning they should be alert and have a normal appetite. They can then be fed her normal volume of food.

Bathing: Do not bathe your pet for 10 days (until the incision is healed). The incision should stay clean and dry.

Monitoring: Check the incision daily for signs of excessive redness, swelling, or discharge. If any of these are noted, please contact us immediately. If your pet is licking or chewing excessively at the incision line, please contact us for placement of an Elizabethan collar. Your pet may be reluctant to use the limb for several days following surgery. As stated above, a towel should be used to support them on leash walks for at least 1 week. If your dog suddenly does not want to bear weight on the limb, please contact us immediately.

Pain Medication: If you requested pain medication to be given, the medication should control pain for up to 48 hours following surgery. If medication has been prescribed and dispensed, please give this medication to your pet according to label instructions.

Thanks again for your continued support of Howard County Veterinary Service, P.C. Your business is much appreciated. If you have questions or concerns regarding your pet's recovery, please contact us at (660)248-3382.