



BRANDYWINE VALLEY

Veterinary Hospital & Surgical Referral Service

Compassionate Pet Care through Client Communication

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FIBULAR HEAD TRANSPOSITION AFTER CARE INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS

Your pet's cranial cruciate ligament has been treated surgically using the fibular head transposition procedure. The operation was invented by a bio-engineer orthopedic surgeon at the University of Pennsylvania; The Fibular Head Transposition is an extra capsular repair technique that uses the lateral collateral ligament to stabilize the knee joint. After cranial transposition of the fibular head, the orientation of the lateral collateral ligament is redirected to resemble that of the cranial cruciate ligament. The surgical procedure involves cutting the attachments of the fibular head to the tibia and moving it forward to a point that the drawer sign (looseness) has been eliminated. This procedure is typically reserved for dogs under twenty pounds. In a retrospective study it was shown to give good to excellent results in 90% of cases. Its biggest advantage is that it is a very minimally invasive technique.

Successful recovery after knee surgery, no matter which procedure has been used, requires a period of controlled activity.

Since the Fibular head transposition is so minimally invasive it allows for early motion and less discomfort. While a comfortable, pain free patient is obviously a good thing, many dogs are tempted to use the operated leg too much, too soon. No matter how comfortable and confident your pet is feeling in the days after the TTA operation, **it is absolutely essential that running, jumping and general "Rough and Tumble" with other pets is avoided for the first eight weeks or so.** The bone must be given time to heal adequately and too much strain placed on the osteotomy too early can result in stress fracture or implant failure. This is rarely catastrophic, but the ensuing complication may be painful and will certainly delay the recovery.

FIRST AND SECOND WEEKS

- Your dog will have a short course of antibiotics and a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) pain reliever. The length of NSAID treatment varies with each patient.
- A bandage is used for 24 hours following surgery. That's all, because it is important that your pet is able to flex and extend the operated knee freely right from day two.
- During the first 14 days encourage your pet to take frequent short leash walks, 5- 10 minutes 5 or 6 times a day. It is important that the operated knee joint is returned to use as quickly as possible –concentrate on walking slowly as this will encourage the patient to use the leg. Ideally your dog should go outside **ON A LEASH** to toilet during the first two weeks after surgery, **DO NOT LET THE DOG SWIM.**
- **No other exercise is recommended for the first 14 days- it is important to not let your dog loose to be free in the house.**

THIRD AND FOURTH WEEKS

- The amount of activity can now be gradually increased but it is essential that the patient is not allowed off the leash until the eight week recovery time. Leash walks can be longer (keep it slow) so that the patient continues to use the operated limb confidently at every step.

FIFTH AND SIX WEEKS

- At this stage, the patient will be capable of frequent lengthy (30 minutes or more) leash walks. The key to success is a program of gradually increased activity.

EIGHT WEEKS

- At first, the patient can be allowed off the leash towards the end of the last walk of the day, choose a quiet area with a good surface with no other dogs or other distractions. Five minutes is enough for the first day off the leash. Subsequently, the amount of free running play and exercise can be increased gradually back towards pre rupture levels. Most dogs will be capable of full unrestricted athletic activity about 12 weeks after surgery. Some residual low grade stiffness and lameness may still be seen at twelve weeks but this will resolve completely over subsequent months as the patient regains full fitness and the osteotomy completes its healing process.

******If owners and pets are compliant with these after instructions we should get a very satisfactory outcome******