



Caring for Your Dog After Knee Surgery.

After the operation, our nurses will begin physiotherapy in hospital to help you pet become more mobile.

In the first four weeks your dog is home:

Do's:

- 🐾 **Walk on a lead** for a maximum of five minutes three times a day.
- 🐾 **Massage his leg** from the paw up and move each joint to mobilise it before setting off. The nurses should demonstrate this to you when you collect your pet. If you are in any doubt about what to do, please ask for advice before leaving to go home.
- 🐾 **Apply an icepack** (a plastic bag full of ice cubes or frozen peas!) around the knee for a few minutes after each walk. This helps to reduce inflammation in the joint.

Dont's:

- 🐾 Allow your dog to **run off the lead**.
- 🐾 Allow your dog to **play with other dogs**.
- 🐾 Allow your dog to **play with toys**, especially balls that have to be caught or chased.
- 🐾 Let him or her spend lots of time on **slippery floors such as laminates**. A slip on these can cause damage to our surgical repair before it has had chance to heal. If necessary put down old sheets or mats to avoid slipping.

FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE OPERATION

PLEASE BRING YOUR DOG BACK TO SEE US SO WE CAN CHECK THAT KNEE MOBILITY IS STARTING TO IMPROVE.

Five to ten weeks after surgery:

REMEMBER THE JOINT IS NOT YET HEALED.

EXERCISE MUST STILL BE RESTRICTED.

- 🐾 You can now increase exercise to **ten minutes three times a day** while continuing massage and ice pack applications as you have done since the operation.

- 🐾 Getting your dog to [move from sitting to standing](#) (five repetitions three times a day) will help to strengthen the thigh muscles and the patella tendon after surgery.
- 🐾 [Stepping backwards or forwards](#) over a door step can also help to do this, providing you keep your dog on a lead and moving slowly. Bounding up steps can damage the surgical repair at this stage. You must avoid your dog getting over confident as the knee gets more comfortable.
- 🐾 For dogs who like water [hydrotherapy](#) is an option at this stage. Start with five minutes at each session and progress only when your pet is coping well.

TEN WEEKS AFTER SURGERY:

PLEASE BRING YOUR DOG BACK TO SEE US SO WE CAN CHECK THE KNEE MOBILITY AGAIN BEFORE STARTING MORE EXERCISE.

Ten weeks after surgery

- 🐾 Slowly start to [increase the distance and speed](#) at which your pet exercises.
- 🐾 Start [increasing speed](#): three walks a day. Every seven days, increase the length of each walk by five minutes per walk.
- 🐾 Start [increasing speed](#) while still on a lead. During every walk, do [three walk to trot](#) or [three walk to stop](#) changes of speed, depending on how fit you and your dog were before the operation.
- 🐾 [Work thigh muscles](#) harder by slowly climbing and coming down stairs.

[IF ANYTHING SEEMS TO HURT OR MAKE YOUR DOG MORE LAME REDUCE THE EXERCISE TO WHAT YOU WERE DOING THE PREVIOUS WEEK AND WAIT SEVEN DAYS BEFORE TRYING AGAIN.](#)

FOUR MONTHS AFTER SURGERY:

PLEASE BRING YOUR DOG BACK TO SEE US SO WE CAN GIVE YOU THE ALL CLEAR BEFORE YOU START TO LET YOUR PET EXERCISE FREELY.

By four months after knee surgery your dog should be regaining the normal strength and mobility in the affected joint. Most dogs will be able to come off pain control medication at that stage and start to return gradually to their normal exercise regime.

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