



## **Femoral Head and Neck Excision Discharge Instructions**

### **INCISIONAL CARE:**

Please monitor your pet's incision twice daily for the first 10-14 days after surgery. Some minor swelling, drainage, and bruising may occur, but if it increases or seems excessive please contact us or your Veterinarian immediately.

Please apply cool compresses to the incision for the first 24-48 hours. This can be accomplished using either ice packs wrapped in a towel or a hand towel that has been refrigerated in cold water. Place the compress on the surgical site/incision for 10-15 minutes, 2-3 times a day. After 48 hours, please switch to warm compresses. Warm compresses should be performed 2-3 times a day, for 10-15 minutes each. Use a wash cloth or hand towel placed under warm water. If it is too warm for you to the touch, it is too warm to place on your pet.

### **EXERCISE RESTRICTION:**

Your pet will need to have restricted activity and be under confinement to ensure appropriate healing; the time period varies but is usually 4-8 weeks. This means that he or she should be confined to a small room or kennel with a good non-slip surface at all times. Dogs may be taken outside for elimination only, using a sling support when walking on any slick surface and on steps until your pet has been released by Dr. Stoll or your Veterinarian.

### **WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

Incision complications can be very serious; therefore it is important to keep your pet from licking the incision line. When not directly supervised, it will be necessary for your pet to wear an Elizabethan Collar (e-collar).

Inflammation and swelling of the surgical site can occur post-operatively and in some cases can even form a seroma (fluid accumulation at a surgical site). Compresses will help decrease the chances of these complications and can help decrease the size of a seroma if one were to occur. If you notice excessive redness, swelling, bruising or discharge at the surgical site, or if the incision appears to be opening, please do not hesitate to contact us. We can help determine if what you are seeing is normal for the stage of healing or if further intervention will be necessary.

### **AT HOME PHYSICAL THERAPY EXERCISES:**

After 48-72 hours, please start performing range of motion exercises 2-3 times per day. You will want to be careful the first time you perform these exercises as some patients will become agitated, vocalize, or in some rare cases bite. These exercises can be performed with your pet lying down or standing. For this



type of surgery, lying down will give better range. You will put the surgical leg through a “bicycle” motion. Extension of the hip (hip straightened behind body) is the most important motion with this surgery to help create a larger pseudo joint. This is done by placing one hand on the foot, below the ankle and one hand in front of and above the knee. You will flex (bend) the knee toward the body, hold for a few seconds, then straighten (extend) the leg to a normal position and then straighten out behind the body. Push the leg until you get resistance, but don’t push to the point where there is discomfort. You will perform 20-30 repetitions each time. Performing your warm compresses before exercises may help with comfort and increase the range of motion. If your pet resists too much or vocalizes during these exercises please [contact us](#) immediately.

Additional exercises to encourage use of the surgery leg would be to have them stand “like they are dancing” with you, with you holding their front legs, have them take 3-5 steps backwards and forwards. Make sure this is on a non-slick surface.

To encourage weight bearing, you can also have your pet eat with an elevated bowl or try having them stand with their front legs on a step and their back legs on the ground. Again making sure it is a non-slick surface to stand on.

#### **FOLLOW UP:**

Your pet will have antibiotics administered during surgery, but in most cases should not require them post-surgery. However, your pet will be sent home on an anti-inflammatory and a pain medication. It is important that these medications are given as directed until finished unless otherwise directed. If your pet experiences vomiting, diarrhea, is extremely lethargic or is unwilling to eat, please contact us or your Veterinarian immediately.

Sutures and skin staples should be removed at 10-14 days post-surgery. Please schedule this appointment with your Veterinarian.

Your pet will have recheck appointments at 2, 4, and probably 6-8 weeks; at these points Dr. Stoll will make recommendations for decreasing restrictions, increasing exercises, and determine the best times for recheck exams. Post-operative radiographs will typically not be performed with femoral head and neck excisions.

**Any questions, concerns, or problems please contact us at  
(910) 512-8912 or e-mail [drstoll@ccvss.org](mailto:drstoll@ccvss.org)**