



Postoperative Guidelines – Following Tibial Tuberosity Advancement (TTA) Surgery

Postoperative recovery from knee surgery, regardless of the procedure used, requires that your pet be kept quiet. With the TTA, the tibia has been cut and repositioned to alleviate the cranial cruciate ligament deficit. With the TTA, when compared to other procedures, many patients have a faster recovery and begin using the leg too much, too soon. It is imperative to avoid running, jumping, and roughhousing with other pets for a minimum of 8 weeks, until the bone has had a chance to adequately heal. Excessive strain placed on the osteotomy too early can result in implant failure.

First and Second Weeks

Your dog will have antibiotics and pain medication for several days. Also, your pet may appear to have more pain than exhibited while in the hospital. Why? Dogs are pretty smart, and they figure out right away that when they act like they are in pain, they will get more attention from their owners. If this is not working, do not overdose; call the office for further recommendations or additional medications.

If your pet has a bandage upon discharge, the bandage needs to be kept clean and dry. Please return in 2-3 days so the bandage can be removed. If the bandage slips down and the incision are showing bring your pet in for bandage removal sooner. When the bandage comes off, you may see some swelling in the leg below the incision area. If swelling occurs, you can ice pack the leg 3 times daily for 3-5 days for 10-20 minutes. Two days after the bandage is removed, you can apply moist heat to the area twice daily for 10-20 minutes. Afterwards, you can begin GENTLE passive range of motion exercises by moving the ankle joint backward and forward and then the knee joint in the same manner. Some dogs may have some drainage from the surgical site for up to 7-10 days. Skin sutures and skin staples, if used, can be irritating to some dogs, and they may try and chew them out.

It is important to not let your pet loose to run freely, particularly up and down stairs without assistance. During the first 14 days only take your pet outside for **eliminations on a leash under your direct control**. They can go outside ON A LEASH to go to the bathroom, and then they must return inside and rest. You must keep your pet quiet during the recovery period, even if this means temporarily medicating your dog. Do not swim the dog. Swimming too soon may result in patella tendonitis, or possibly implant failure. No other exercise is recommended for the first 14 days.

Third and 4th Weeks

At this point, walking on leash is tolerated. Pain medication should no longer be needed; however, giving one aspirin, with food, for the average 50-100# dog 30 minutes prior to any physical therapy is acceptable. Walking on a leash can be started, but begin with one block and stop. If the dog returns home and is not in pain, you may increase this in one-block increments every 4-5 days as tolerated, provided your dog is not in pain when the

walk is over. While walking you can do several things to help recovery. You can push the dog's hips towards the operated leg slightly to help convince him/her that the leg can be used. You can also lift the front end of the dog for 5-second intervals prior to starting the walk to increase the strength of the leg. Try several repetitions. You can also make your dog sit and stand for 10–20 repetitions. Additional therapy can include applying heat to the leg for 20 minutes, then exercise the knee through backward and forward passive range of motion.

Fifth and Sixth Weeks

By this time, walks should be in the 20-minute range or better, and tolerated well. Do not run yet. Increase the duration of walking as much as you can without causing the dog pain. Do not exceed the 20-minute range. If you have access to a pool, some hydrotherapy for 10 minutes is all right, but do not leave the dog unattended nor allowed to swim in water over the dog's head. Any hydrotherapy over minutes 10 minutes is more likely to exaggerate patella tendon inflammation and result in lameness.

Seventh and Ten Weeks

At the end of this period, it is time to come in for the follow up x-ray. We want to make sure everything has healed prior to increasing the exercise as tolerated. At 10 weeks a postoperative follow up radiograph is taken. We will be evaluating the leg for proper long-term alignment of the implants, failures, and to assure adequate healing of the osteotomy site. Once healed, a regular regiment of exercise as tolerated by the dog will help in recovery to full use of the limb. Generally, this is about another 1-2 months. Be forewarned that if you just go home and turn the dog loose, he will be in pain. This is the point where you can SLOWLY build back up to full exercise. Premature overuse of the leg will result in critical damage to the proper healing process. We cannot overemphasize enough, do not let your dog run loose.

Date: _____ Bandage removal (if applicable)

_____ 2nd week recheck

_____ 4th week recheck

_____ 6th week recheck

_____ 10th week recheck (with radiographs)

Postoperative medications:

1. Rimadyl or other NSAID to be given for 10 days
2. Tramadol - 1.5 mg/lb TID orally for 2 weeks
3. Cephalexin 10 mg/lb BID for 2 weeks

4. Recommend Hill's j/d Prescription Diet

Please go to:

<http://www.OnsiteVSS.com>

“Clients” -> “Orthopedic” -> “Cranial Cruciate Ligament” -> “Tibial Tuberosity Advancement Videos” and select **Post-operative TTA Care Video**