

Postoperative care & Exercise regime for TPLO/CCW patients

Postoperatively, patients who have had TPLO or CCW need to have strict exercise control. They are at risk of excessive weight gain, especially if they are normally active dogs. It is important to control their calorific intake. We advise reducing their food by 25-30% in the 8 week postoperative period. Excessive weight gain in this time can adversely affect recovery from the surgery. Ask your vets to weigh your dog during the postoperative consultations.

Week 1

You should make an appointment to see your vet between 3 & 5 days postoperatively. Expect the incision site to be a bit swollen and tender. Your dog will probably be quite lame on the leg, and may not want to put any weight on the leg at all.

You should enforce STRICT REST. This means no running, jumping, climbing the stairs or playing. Prevent your pet from licking the surgical site as this can cause infection. Take your dog for a short walk if necessary to go to the toilet, or use a lead in the garden for toileting purposes. You can use a belly sling for support if your dog is struggling with mobility at first.

Cold Compress on the surgical site can help. Use a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel on your dog's knee for 5-10 minutes 2-4 times daily. Icing helps reduce the pain and swelling associated with the surgery. Only do this if your dog is happy to let you.

Warm Compress from Day 5 onwards, if the incision site is clean and dry. Use a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel - this should only be warm to the touch, not too hot.

Weeks 2-4

You should make an appointment to see your vet between 10 & 14 days postoperatively. The swelling should settle down and your dog will gradually become more confident with the leg.

Exercise should still be strictly limited - with 10-15 minutes on a short lead, very slowly, 3-4 a day. You still need to prevent your dog from running, jumping or climbing the stairs. It is very important that you do not allow your pet to overdo it, as they will feel that their leg is

much more comfortable than preoperatively, but the bone will not be fully healed for at least 8 weeks. It is frustrating but it is worth being patient at this stage.

Weeks 4-8

Exercise can be increased to 20 mins 3-4 times per day, but still on a short lead and under strict control.

You can arrange for your vet to radiograph the leg at 6-8 weeks postoperatively.

Lameness should be much improved by now. Your dog will be keen to get going, so it is important that you continue to control the amount of exercise they are doing.

If the radiographs show good bone healing, your vets will make a recommendation regarding return to normal exercise.

Swimming/Hydrotherapy

Swimming is a good way of exercising without excessive impact on the joints. Be careful, though, that you don't allow your dog to jump into or out of the water and avoid slippery/uneven rocks. It is best to avoid this until after the 6-8 week postoperative radiographs have been performed and your vet will then advise you on the best level of exercise to undertake with your pet. Check with your vet if you are thinking of swimming your dog during the postoperative period, and ask about availability of hydrotherapy in your area.