

TPLO Aftercare

Tibial plateau leveling osteotomy (TPLO) has been performed today to correct a ruptured cranial cruciate ligament. When a dog ruptures their cruciate ligament, the weight bearing force (solid white arrow, left image) is on a slope (white line, left image) called the tibial plateau. This unstable construct results in pain, lameness and weakness. To correct these issues, a circular cut is made in the bone, which is then rotated. The new shape of the joint (second image) corrects this instability because the weight bearing force (white arrow) is on a flat platform/tibial plateau (white line). This resultant stability allows the patient to use the leg pain free once again and with the correct aftercare, return to normal function.

The bone is stabilized using a plate and screws (middle and right images) whilst it heals, which takes a minimum of 8 weeks. Whilst the bone is healing, it is essential that we do not overload the implants and patient activity must be restricted. Failure to do so can result in increased swelling and subsequent infection, delayed healing, implant failure, and other complications which may result in an unsatisfactory outcome for the patient.

Post op confinement

- All patients must be strictly confined for 6-weeks minimum following TPLO. This is best achieved using a crate.
- The only exercise permitted for the first 6 weeks is slow, controlled walks to use the toilet. All patients must be kept on a lead at all times with no exceptions.
- Running, jumping or climbing must be avoided with no exceptions, including beds, couches or stairs. Any uncontrolled movement in the house is not permitted during the first 6-weeks.
- Slippery floors should be avoided.

Post Op Wound Care

- The surgical incision must be protected from self-trauma. A buster collar must be worn at all times with no exceptions for the first two weeks. If a patient needs their collar removed to eat or drink then they must be constantly supervised during this time to ensure they do not lick the wound. A single lick can result in major complications such as infection or wound breakdown and have serious consequences for patient recovery.
- We will instruct you at the two week check whether it is safe to stop wearing the buster collar
- Please check the surgical incision at least twice a day. It should be clean, dry and free from any odour. There should be no gaps visible in the incision. If you have any concerns about the incision please contact us immediately.
- Please ensure the rest crate/rest area is kept clean and free from any urine/faeces
- Please ensure other pets in the house are kept away from the patient for the first two weeks.

Post Op Exercise

- Week 1-2
 - o Max 10 minute slow walk on leash, twice daily (plus trips to toilet on leash as needed)
 - o Cold compress 15 minutes, twice daily. Cold pack must be wrapped in a towel and not left unsupervised
 - o Passive range of motion 20 repetitions, twice daily
 - o Massage 5 minutes, twice daily
- Week 3-6
 - o Max 15 minute slow walk on leash, twice daily (plus trips to toilet on leash as needed)
 - o Passive range of motion 20 repetitions, twice daily
 - o Massage 5 minutes, twice daily

Post op Medication

- Meloxicam
- Gabapentin
- Paracetamol
- Cephalexin

Re-examination

- 2-3 day post op check
- 2-week post op check
- 4-week phone update
- 6-week post op check and x-rays

