

Caring for your pet after Spinal Surgery

To optimize the success of your pet's recent surgery, please follow these instructions:

- Check the incision daily for redness, swelling, discharge, and suture/staple condition. Keep the area clean and dry. Bathing can be resumed after staple/suture removal.
- Return to regular pre-surgery feeding routine.
- Our most common post-operative activity recommendation is:
 - **Crate/Cage** confinement for 2 weeks
 - **Room** confinement for 2 weeks
 - **House** rest confinement for 2 weeks

During this 6-week period there should be no running, jumping, playing or going up/down stairs. Excessive activity can cause serious complications.

- Carry your pet outside three times a day for bathroom breaks. If they are too large to carry, use a sling under their belly to assist you.
- Pick up / Carry your pet in a level position and support their entire body.
- Keep your pet on a leash at all times while outdoors.
- Keep your pet's crate well padded and clean. The crate should be large enough to sit, lie down, stand and turn around comfortably.
- It is not unusual for our patients to return home and not defecate for several days due to use of narcotics for pain management, decrease in appetite, and the spinal problem itself. If your pet has not defecated after being home for 2 days, you may consider using a stool softener that can be purchased at any pharmacy. We use a product that contains **Docusate** as the active ingredient (brand names include Colace, Surfak). Dogs under 20 pounds can get 50mg gel capsules every 12 hours; Dogs over 20 pounds can get 100mg every 12 hours. Do not use other products without first checking with your family veterinarian. If your pet has still not defecated after 2 days receiving a stool softener, contact your family veterinarian or our office.
- Give all medications as directed on the discharge letter. Please notify our office of any adverse reactions.
- DO NOT administer the following drugs at the same time: Steroids (prednisone, prednisolone, dexamethasone) and Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (Rimadyl, Deramaxx)
- DO NOT administer human drugs (e.g. Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, Aspirin)