



Lone Star Veterinary Surgical Specialists

Surgical Solutions for Your Loved Pets

Postoperative Care: Fracture Repair

Your pet has had surgery to repair their fracture with internal fixation, like a bone plate/screws, pins, and/or wire. The prognosis following fracture repair is good, and how well and quickly your pet recovers depends on many factors. Some factors that affect healing include the type of injury that caused the fracture, the age and size of your pet, and how well you follow the postoperative instructions. If excessive activity is allowed too soon following surgery, stabilization of the fracture can be lost, requiring additional surgery.

Immediately after surgery there may be some bruising or swelling around the surgical site, but this should continue to improve daily. Your pet must be kept confined and have restricted exercise for at least 8 weeks after surgery. The incision should appear clean and dry, with skin edges well apposed and no redness or discharge from the site evident. Do not bathe your pet until sutures are removed 2 weeks after surgery.

Exercise:

1. Cover all slippery floors with throw rugs or indoor/outdoor turf carpet for the first 8 weeks after surgery.
2. You will need to confine your pet to a small kennel/crate **at all times** during the healing process. For dogs, limit activity to very short leash walks for bowel and urinary purposes until the bone is healed (typically 2 months). Do NOT let your pet off the leash even in the backyard, as they will likely feel good enough to run and play long before their bone is healed. No jumping, climbing stairs or rough-housing with other pets or people. **Excessive activity may result in failure of the surgical implants, necessitating another surgery.**

Incision:

1. Monitor the incision daily for signs of infection: redness, swelling, pain or discharge. Some mild swelling and bruising immediately after surgery is expected, but should continue to improve daily while healing.



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2. Do **NOT** allow licking of the incision as this could cause an infection or open the incision. An Elizabethan collar (cone) should be kept on your pet at all times for at least 2 weeks until the sutures are removed.

Follow-up examinations:

1. Recheck to remove sutures in 10-14 days
2. Radiographs (x-ray) of the repaired fracture site will be done around 4 weeks and 8 weeks to ensure proper healing. Depending on the nature of the fracture or the patient, some cases may require additional imaging at 12+ weeks to confirm the bone is fully healed.
3. If the 4-week radiographs show normal healing, then your pet may be confined to one small room in the house (no ledges, furniture, etc. to jump on/off) when you're away
4. If the 8-week radiographs show complete healing, then your pet can be slowly returned to normal activity.

If you have any questions or concerns during your pet's recovery, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for letting Lone Star Surgical Specialists take care of you and your pet!