

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR PET'S TPLO

Weeks 1-4 post TPLO:

- Check the incision twice daily for redness, excessive swelling or drainage. The skin staples should be removed 10 to 14 days after surgery.
- Leash walk only when going outside to void.
- When inside your dog must remain strictly confined. This means in a crate or in a small room with a non-skid floor and NO furniture to jump on or off!
- It is extremely important not to let your dog lick at the incision site. An Elizabethan collar should be worn when your dog is not being strictly supervised.
- Give pain medications and antibiotics as directed.
- Some bruising and swelling at the incision site is expected for the first 10 days. A cool pack (a zip-lock bag filled with 3 parts water to 1 part rubbing alcohol that has been in the freezer for 30 plus minutes) wrapped in a towel may be applied to the incision site twice daily for 10 minutes for up to 5 days post operatively.
- Within 14 days of the surgery your dog should be weight bearing on the limb. This means he/she will be able to stand on the leg but will be toe touching at the walk.
- When starting physical therapy, remember to go slowly and stop the session if your pet seems exceptionally uncomfortable - trying to bite, kicking off you with the unaffected limb or vocalizing. If this behavior continues contact TVSS.

PASSIVE RANGE OF MOTION (ROM) and stretching exercises should begin once your pet has returned home. (Click [here](#) to see a video that explains how to perform these exercises).

- These exercises may be performed with your pet standing or laying on his/her side.
- When starting these exercises it is recommended to have 2 people handling the dog- one to steady the head and one to perform the exercise.
- Begin by grasping the paw of the operated limb with one hand and with the other hand hold the thigh just above the knee.
- Then slowly flex the knee toward the body until you feel resistance or sense discomfort from your pet.
- Hold for a count of 10 and then slowly extend the limb to a normal "standing" position.
- Repeat these exercises 10 to 20 times 2- 4 times daily for the next 4 weeks.
- A 4 -week recheck appointment with our surgeons is recommended to evaluate your dog's progress.

Weeks 4-8 post TPLO:

- As long as our surgeons are satisfied with your dog's recovery at this point, leash walks may begin.
- Start with slow walks and a short leash on level ground for 5 to 10 minutes 2 to 3 times a day.
- Move slow enough to ensure the limb is used in every step.
- Gradually increase the time you walk and the number of walks you go on a day.
- Your pet will benefit more from increasing the number of walks rather than fewer walks covering more distance.
- You should work up to about 20 minutes 2-3 times per day.

Week 8 and After:

- Another recheck appointment with radiographs is recommended to ensure that the bone is healing as expected and to determine your dog's joint and limb function.
- If our surgeons say your dog is ready, then the next stage of physical therapy begins.

- Gradually increase your dog's walks to 1 mile in 15 to 20 minutes - working slowly up to 7 to 10 miles a week.
- Slow stair climbing (both up and down) should be introduced but must be done on a leash to encourage full weight bearing and pushing off with the affected limb.
- Jogging slowly for 2 to 5 minutes at a time 3 to 4 times daily. Gradually increase the number of times and duration of the run.
- Occasionally your dog may be lame after increased activity. As long as this does not persist and resolves with a few hours of rest you may continue on your schedule.
- If however, your pet seems very uncomfortable and resists the activity it is fine to skip a session or even a full day as long as the next day you're seeing improvement.

Any questions or concerns, please contact us @919.495.1177 or info@tarheelvets.com