Aftercare Instructions: TTA Surgery (Tibial Tuberosity Advancement)

Community Animal Care

This information sheet explains what to expect and how to care for your dog after a **Tibial Tuberosity Advancement (TTA)** procedure, which is performed to treat a **cranial cruciate ligament (CCL) injury**. Proper home care and strict adherence to activity restrictions are essential for a successful recovery.

What to Expect

Before Surgery

- You will receive specific drop-off instructions from our team.
- Please follow all pre-surgical fasting and medication instructions provided.
- Our surgical coordinator will review the procedure and answer any last-minute questions at check-in.

Day of Surgery

- Your dog will undergo the TTA procedure under general anesthesia.
- Throughout the day, your dog will be closely monitored by our medical team for comfort and safety.
- Most dogs begin recovery the same day but may be sleepy, groggy, or nauseated afterward.

Overnight Hospital Stay

- Your dog will stay **overnight at Community Animal Care following the procedure**.
- Pain management, monitoring, and nursing care will continue during the hospital stay.

Discharge Day

- You will be scheduled for a **discharge appointment the day after surgery**.
- During this appointment, our team will:
    - Review medications and dosing instructions
    - Go over home-care, rehabilitation, and activity restrictions
    - Answer any questions you may have about your dog's recovery

Immediate Post-Operative Period (First 24–72 Hours at Home)

Recovery

- Your dog may be groggy, unsteady, nauseated, or reluctant to eat for the first 12–24 hours.
- Supervise closely during this time.

Bandage or Dressing

- A bandage or light dressing may be present.
- Keep it **clean and dry**.

Pain Control & Medications

- Your dog will go home with pain medication and possibly antibiotics.
- **Give medications exactly as prescribed.**
- Do **not** give any additional medications unless approved by your veterinarian.

Appetite & Elimination

- Appetite should begin to return within 24–48 hours.
- Contact us if your dog:
    - Cannot urinate or defecate
    - Vomits repeatedly
    - Has no appetite after 48 hours

Incision Care

- Keep the incision **clean and dry**.
- **No bathing** until cleared by the clinic.
- Prevent licking or chewing using an **E-collar or protective device** as instructed.
- Check the incision **daily** for:
    - Redness
    - Swelling
    - Discharge
    - Foul odor

Sutures or staples are typically removed **10–14 days after surgery**.

Activity Restrictions & Rehabilitation (Surgeon-Specific Instructions)

Confinement & Exercise

- **Strict confinement is required for 8–10 weeks.**
- Your dog should be confined to a crate or small room when not supervised.
- **Leash walks only.** No running, jumping, stairs, off-leash activity, or play.

Leash Walks

- Leash walk **daily**.
- Walks should be slow and controlled.
- Gradually increase **length and duration only**, as tolerated and directed.

Cold & Warm Compress Therapy

Cold Compress (Days 1–7)

- Apply a **cold compress** to the surgical area for **10–15 minutes**, **4 times daily**, for the first **7 days**.

Warm Moist Compress (Days 8–14)

- After the first week, begin **warm, moist compresses**.
- Apply for **10–15 minutes**, **4 times daily**, for an additional **7 days**.

Massage & Range-of-Motion Therapy (Days 1–21)

- Perform therapy **4 times daily** for **21 days**.

Massage Therapy

- Gently massage the muscles around the surgical leg for **3–5 minutes**.

Range-of-Motion Therapy

- After massage:
    - Slowly **extend the joint** until your dog resists
    - Hold in that position for **5–7 seconds**
    - Slowly **flex the joint** until resistance is felt
    - Hold for **5–7 seconds**

- Continue this sequence for **5–10 minutes** per session.

Stop if your dog shows signs of pain or distress and contact us with any concerns.

Swelling, Bruising & Limping

- Mild swelling and bruising around the knee or lower limb is **normal for 2–4 weeks**.
- Some limping or uneven weight-bearing is expected early in recovery.

Contact us if:

- Limping worsens
- Your dog stops bearing weight on the leg entirely

Pain Management

- Continue all prescribed pain medications as directed.
- Do **not** stop medications early without veterinary approval.
- Watch for side effects such as:
    - Vomiting
    - Diarrhea
    - Changes in appetite or behavior

Report any concerns promptly.

Diet & Weight Management

- Appetite may be reduced temporarily; offer **small, palatable meals**.
- Maintaining a healthy weight is critical to reduce stress on the healing limb.
- Ask our team for dietary guidance if needed.

Follow-Up Appointments & Imaging

Follow-up visits are an important part of recovery.

Typical schedule includes:

- **10–14 days:** Incision check and suture/staple removal
- **6–8 weeks:** X-rays to evaluate bone healing
- Additional rechecks as recommended by your surgeon

Please bring your dog to **all scheduled appointments**.

Signs of Complications — Contact Us Immediately If You Notice:

- Incision is red, swollen, hot, opens, or has foul-smelling discharge
- Excessive bleeding from the incision or bandage
- Sudden worsening of lameness or refusal to bear weight
- Persistent vomiting, diarrhea, or refusal to eat for more than 48 hours
- Difficulty breathing, collapse, or severe lethargy
- Any sudden or severe pain or distress

Common Post-Operative Concerns (Usually Normal)

- Mild fever, bruising, or slight incision drainage during the first 24–48 hours
- Small fluid pockets (seromas) near the incision, which often resolve on their own
- Temporary muscle loss in the affected limb during recovery

Home Comfort Tips

- Provide a quiet, warm, and comfortable recovery area.
- Use non-slip rugs or flooring.
- Keep children and other pets calm and separated as needed.

Rehabilitation can improve comfort and speed recovery. Options may include:

- In-clinic physical therapy
- Laser therapy
- Guided strengthening and range-of-motion exercises

One of our team members will discuss rehabilitation options and formulate a plan.