

General care for bandages

The purpose of the bandage is to protect the soft tissues (skin, muscles, etc.) during the early postoperative period. The time the bandage will be maintained depends on the patient's medical problem and the purpose of the bandage. Please follow the general care instructions for bandages given by your veterinarian and listed in this handout.

During the early postoperative period while the bandage is present, the patients' activity should be limited. It is best to allow only supervised exercise on a leash. You should not let the bandage become wet or soiled since a moist dermatitis may result. If the pet must go outside, please limit and supervise its activity. If the ground is wet please cover the bandage (temporarily) with a plastic bag. The plastic bag, however, should be removed after the walk.

Please check the bandage at least twice daily for signs of irritation or swelling. Your pet may lick and chew at the bandage if pressure sores develop. If the bandage is placed too tightly, the toes will become swollen, excessively hot or excessively cold, and the patient will chew at the bandage. This may be associated with a sudden decrease in the use of the bandaged limb. You should also check the bandage daily for evidence of a foul odor or any evidence of discharge soaking through the bandage. Odor or discharge may be an indication of a pressure sore or moist dermatitis. Finally, you should monitor your animal's appetite and attitude closely. Sudden changes in attitude or a decrease in appetite may signal a problem with the bandage. If you notice any of these problems contact your veterinarian as soon as possible (preferably that day).