

## Post-operative Information: Perineal Hernia

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Surgeon: *Scott Murphy, DVM, Dip ACVS* Patient: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

### Surgical Findings:

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Medications (please give as directed):  
 antibiotic \_\_\_\_\_ x 7 days  
 pain medications \_\_\_\_\_ x 7-10 days  
 stool softener \_\_\_\_\_ x 14 days  
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### ACTIVITY RESTRICTION x 3 weeks

- Please keep your pet in a comfortable, safe indoor location with no free access to stairs for the initial 24 hours following the procedure. Your pet may be groggy for the next few days. He or she may whine or appear more anxious than usual; this may indicate pain/discomfort or a side-effects of the medications. Please call your veterinarian for assistance with any medication adjustments or return for an examination and additional pain medications as needed.
- Leash walk to urinate and defecate for 3 weeks, try and avoid unrestricted activity outside and try and avoid playing with other pets in the house.
- Elizabethan collar until the skin sutures are removed is warranted to prevent damage to the surgical repair.

### INCISION CARE

- Please look at the incision once daily. It should be dry, slightly red along the margins, and slightly swollen/thick on the edges. Over several days, it should lose redness and swelling.
- Some swelling of the wound is normal (seroma), as is some bruising (which can be very dark red). Often as healing progresses, the swelling can move outward and the bruising can spread out.
- You should become concerned that your pet may have an infection if:
  - the wound becomes very swollen or discharges yellow or green material
  - your dog becomes very depressed or lethargic
- Sometimes the wound will ooze some blood during the first 24-48 hours at home. You should not be alarmed at this. You can hold a cotton sponge over it for 5-10 minutes to stop the bleeding.

### CRYOTHERAPY

- Apply a conforming cold pack (frozen peas, ice pack, or a ziplock bag filled with ice cubes) with a thin towel around the cold source to the surgical site for 10 minutes, four times daily for the first three days after surgery. This will decrease the swelling and bruising at the site and increase your pets comfort during the early recovery period.

### DIET

- Dietary modification with a high fiber diet coupled with stool softeners are sometimes used to help with reducing the pain and straining associated with defecation. In addition, it helps to reduce the potential for breakdown of the repaired tissues

### PROGRESS EXAMS

- Please make an appointment to see your veterinarian 10-14 days following surgery for a progress exam. The surgical site will be assessed at this time, any sutures will be removed, and questions regarding postoperative management can be addressed.

### POSTOPERATIVE COURSE

Your pet should want to drink, and may eat with a little coaxing within 12-24 hours of surgery. He should be urinating normally, but it may take 2-3 days for a bowel movement and when it occurs, there may be straining the first few times. For about 2 weeks your pet may be temporarily incontinent as a result of stretching of the perianal muscles during the repair. This should improve, as permanent incontinence is rare following surgery, but it is possible. An occasional complication is rectal prolapse, where the rectum will pooch out after defecation. If this persists and will not resolve on its' own, please call for advice as soon as possible.

The prognosis is good for the majority of cases. However, in 10-15% of the patients, recurrence of the hernia may occur within a year. Prevention of over activity and self-trauma may help lower this recurrence rate. There is no proven means to prevent perineal hernias from forming. The problem is rarely seen in castrated male dogs, so early castration in dogs not intended for breeding is recommended.