

Informed Consent

Patella Luxation with Extracapsular ACL Repair

Your pet has been diagnosed presumptively with a tear in one of the major stabilizers of the knee joint, the cranial cruciate ligament (CrCL or ACL, ACL tear). In addition, your dog has been diagnosed with a luxating kneecap/sliding kneecap/luxating patella (most commonly a medially luxating patella, MPL). These problems often occur together and although it sounds like a lot, this is routine for us to fix. We use a few different procedures in combination (as needed) to address both problems. We will be using an extracapsular repair, also known as lateral fabellar suture for the ACL tear. In addition, we will be using a few techniques to keep the patella in place including possibly a wedge recession trochleoplasty (make a more secure home for the patella), tibial crest transposition (altering the insertion point of the patella tendon to pull it away from the direction of luxation) , lateral imbrication (tightening the joint capsule on one side), and possibly medial release (loosening the joint capsule on the other side). The prognosis is excellent with surgery. However, we need to make you aware of a few of the common complications that could arise after this surgery. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

The risks of complications after MPL/ACL repair is low, about 5-10% of cases. Here are some potential risks:

Infection- this is a risk with any surgery and is usually treatable with oral antibiotic therapy and in some cases may require removal of the nylon suture or any pins that were placed. Infection of the joint (septic arthritis) is rare.

Recurrent patella luxation- the MPL repair utilizes a variety of means to keep your pet's patella stable. In addition, the impact of scar tissue and healing may affect the repair. There is risk of recurrent luxation in the same direction (under-correction) or luxation in the opposite direction (over-correction) as was present prior to surgery. The risk of recurrent luxation increases with the higher grade of patella luxation (those dogs with worse patella luxations are at higher risk of recurrence). Generally, we recommend revision in cases of recurrent luxation.

Suture failure- the success of the surgery depends on the suture for the ACL repair remaining intact. In some cases, it can slip, loosen, or break. Most often, replacement is recommended (additional replacements after one time are exceedingly rare)

Improper suture placement- this occurs when the lateral fabellar suture is placed too tight, too loose, or in the wrong place

Implant problems- including loosening/migration, breakage, infection, or failure. In some cases surgery may need to be revised or implants may need to be removed.

Arthritis-despite our goal of stabilizing the stifle (knee), there was damage to the joint as soon as the ligament began to tear. Arthritis will progress, despite therapy, and although the surgery will allow your pet to compensate for this much better than without surgery, its possible the arthritis may progress enough over time to affect your pet. Medical therapies can be discussed at that time.

Fracture of the tibial crest- this may or may not require additional therapies

Entrapment/damage to the peroneal nerve- this may require replacement of the lateral fabellar suture

Meniscal tear- this is treated at surgery in most cases, but if it isn't or if it is treated ineffectively, additional therapy may be needed