

Informed Consent

Joint Luxation and/or Collateral Ligament Rupture Repair Open Reduction

Your pet has been diagnosed with a luxated, or mis-placed, joint. Closed reduction uses physical manipulations without surgery to attempt to replace the joint, usually followed by some type of immobilization bandage. You have chosen open reduction, where surgery is performed to first, put the joint back in place, and second, some methods are used to secure the joint in place. Methods for maintaining open reduction vary but may include screws, bone anchors or bone tunnels and some type of large gauge suture material and possibly metallic tubes and suture buttons. These materials (called implants) are used to fashion things such as “prosthetic ligaments” to help maintain reduction. Even with surgery, often a supportive splint or bandage is used to help protect the repair during healing. Prognosis is good to excellent with surgery. However, we need to make you aware of a few of the common complications that could arise after surgery. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

The risks of complications after open reduction is low, about 5-10% of cases. Here are some potential risks:

Failure of reduction and re-luxation- the goal of surgery is to replace the joint and secure it in place. If surgery is not successful, the joint may luxate again and revision surgery may be indicated

Implant irritation, loosening, migration, breakage, or infection- complications with the materials used to maintain joint reduction may occur and this could require revision surgery or surgery to remove the materials that were placed. If sufficient scar tissue has formed to hold the joint in place, materials may not always need to be replaced, if they require removal.

Arthritis/osteoarthritis (OA)/ degenerative joint disease (DJD)- if a joint is luxated for a significant length of time, there could be damage to the cartilage, and that could lead to arthritis even after the joint has been replaced. Arthritis would take time to develop and may require additional medical or surgical treatments long term.

Bandage complications- most often, a bandage with either cast or splint support is used to help protect the repair. Good bandage care is key after surgery. The bandage must be kept clean, dry, intact, and in place. A bandage that has slipped or that has been damaged (ie chewed) is not providing the support it is supposed to and can compromise the repair. A wet bandage or a dirty bandage can lead to nasty skin infections or sores. All of these things could lead to additional surgery. Good bandage care is key.

Infection- this is a risk with any surgery and is usually treatable with many oral antibiotic therapy and in some cases may require removal of the implants. An infection within the joint, called septic arthritis, is rare.

Damage to peri-articular structures: our goal as surgeons is to provide therapy without causing harm. However, when we need to address joint luxations, the soft tissues could become entrapped or damaged inadvertently during surgery or by the implants.

Complications could include damage to adjacent joints or soft tissues (muscle/tendon, ligament, nerves or blood vessels). Any complications in this regard are difficult to predict and are handled on a case by case basis.

Persistent luxation or poor function: there are other methods that can be used if a joint becomes unamenable to open reduction and these are addressed on a case by case manner. In rare cases, the joint may be replaced but the pet may still experience poor function. These can be addressed on a case by case manner as well.

Reduced range of motion- despite the joint being put back in place, scar tissue may form that limits the normal range of motion of the joint. This may or may not impact function and there may or may not be additional therapies recommended