

Informed Consent

Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy (TPLO)

Your dog 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). You have elected a tibial plateau leveling osteotomy (TPLO) to treat this disease. The prognosis is excellent with surgery, however, we need to make you aware of a few of the common complications that could arise after TPLO surgery. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

The risks of complications after TPLO 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 TPLO plate once the bone has healed. The dog will still receive the benefit of surgery if the plate is removed, assuming the bone has healed as expected.

Patella luxation- this may require revision surgery if it occurs

Pivot shift- most notably a gait abnormality not associated with pain or lameness but may be associated with lameness in some cases. Sometimes this resolved with physical therapy and other times more surgery is required to correct this issue.

Arthritis/osteoarthritis (OA)/ degenerative joint disease (DJD)-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. 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.

Patellar tendon desmitis (swelling)- a swollen tendon may or may not cause lameness during the early recovery period.

Implant loosening or failure- screw loosening or breakage may or may not need additional therapy. A broken plate will usually require additional therapy

Bone fracture- we can see fibula fractures and fractures of the tibia and fractures of a part of the tibia (the tibial crest). They may or may not need additional therapy

Osteomyelitis (bone infection)- this is very serious but rare

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

There are rare reports of plate-associated cancers