

# ELBOW ARTHROSCOPY

## THE PROCEDURE

Arthroscopy is a minimally invasive technique used for examining joints, most commonly the elbow. During arthroscopy a 1.8, 2.4 or 2.7 mm camera is inserted into the joint through incisions less than 1cm long, and high definition images are viewed on a screen. During arthroscopy very small instruments can be inserted in the joint in order to further examine structures within the joint or to treat joint disease.

## POST OPERATIVE CARE

Arthroscopy is a major procedure and it is important to follow these instructions closely for best chance of a successful outcome. The complication rate for arthroscopy is low. A transient increase in lameness is sometimes seen following arthroscopy but this usually settles down within 4-8 weeks. Infection can occur in up to 1% of patients. Some patients may experience post-operative swelling around the operated joint.



### MEDICATION



Your pet will be prescribed pain relief and may also be prescribed antibiotics, it is important to follow instructions to avoid complications. Please report any changes in demeanour, vomiting or diarrhoea to your vet immediately.

### SURGICAL SITE



Your dog will have two small surgical wounds. Please check this area twice daily, and report any swelling, redness or discharge from the wound.

### RECOVERY TIME



The average recovery time for this procedure is 6-8 weeks. This will include restricted exercise, rest and recovery and rehabilitation and maybe physiotherapy.

# REST, RECOVERY AND RETURNING TO NORMAL LIFE

## RECOVERY

It is essential to your pet's recovery that they are carefully monitored and cared for in the time after their procedure. The recovery time will vary depending on the procedure being done. If you ever have any concerns about your pet's recovery schedule please contact the practice. You can also use our recovery tracker on the final page to help make a plan for your recovery schedule and make the recovery as seamless as possible.

## INTRODUCING EXERCISE

After 4-6 weeks post operatively if your pet is comfortable, 5 minutes of lead walking twice daily can be introduced, this can be increased to 10 minutes twice daily at 6 -8 weeks post operatively. Thereafter as long as progress has been steady you can increase lead walks by 5 minutes per week up to 30 minutes twice daily on the lead. At this time your pet can start to have time off the lead.

## TEMPERATURE THERAPY

For 3 days post operatively - use an ice pack wrapped in a towel applied to the outside of the joint (not directly over the wound) for 5-10 mins 2-3 times daily. Some swelling of the operated leg may occur and cold therapy and gentle massage from the toes up towards will reduce this.

## EXERCISE RESTRICTION

Usually we recommend strict rest for 4-6 weeks post-operatively. This means confinement to a cage or room with no furniture to jump on and off, especially when your dog is unsupervised. Stairs should be avoided and toileting should always be on a lead.

## GENTLE EXERCISES

Once your dog becomes more comfortable post operatively, start gentle passive flexion and extension exercises of the injured joint. Your clinic will show you how to do this. Start with 5 repetitions twice daily, and increase to 20 repetitions three times daily. Stop immediately if your dog resents this, or seems painful.

## PHYSIOTHERAPY

Post-operative rehabilitation support will be provided by qualified Veterinary Physiotherapists at Dog Town in Chiswick.

They will be providing follow-up appointments with patients for an assessment prior to providing an appropriate treatment plan to aid and improve the recovery process.

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*Please contact the clinic if you have any concerns about your pet's recovery following their procedure.*