

**Exercise Instructions following TPLO (6-12 weeks)**

Your vet has sent us x-rays of your dog taken approximately 6 weeks after the TPLO surgery. The x-rays show that the cut in the bone is healing satisfactorily and that there are no problems with the metal implants.

I hope your dog has been progressing well. At this stage after surgery, it is normal for there still to be some evidence of lameness in the operated leg, but this should continue to improve over the next 6 weeks.

The aim for exercise over the next 6 weeks is to gradually increase the amount of exercise back to normal. If your dog's rehabilitation is being supervised by a physiotherapist, then I am happy for you to follow whatever exercise plan they have provided. Otherwise, I would suggest the following plan:

If you have been using a crate at home, it is no longer necessary to confine your dog to a crate.

Week 7: 15 minutes on the lead, starting at twice daily and increasing to three times daily

Week 8: 20 minutes on the lead, two to three times daily

Week 9: 25 minutes on the lead, two to three times daily

Week 10: 30 minutes on the lead, two to three times daily

Weeks 11-12: Start using an extending lead to give more freedom on walks – continue 30 minutes, two to three times daily.

If your dog has been progressing well, you can start to introduce walks on soft and uneven ground from week 9 after surgery. At first, walk only at a slow pace on any uneven ground to allow your dog to work the smaller muscles which help with balance and co-ordination.

From week 10 after surgery, you can introduce uphill work to increase the work of the back legs, starting small and gradually increasing the incline and length. Small sets of steps can also be useful at this stage, although I would undertake these slowly and under close control.

Throughout this period (weeks 7 to 12), it remains very important to continue to avoid any off-lead running or jumping, or uncontrolled climbing of stairs, furniture, etc.

From the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> week after surgery, if you have continued to see improvement with no increase in lameness, then you can return your dog to normal off-lead exercise.

If you have any concerns with your dog's recovery during this period, please contact your vet for assessment and review.

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