
Complete Post-Operative Soft Tissue Surgery Discharge Instructions

These instructions provide a general overview of the expected post-operative care following a soft tissue procedure performed by **Hani M Korani DVM, DACVS-SA**. **Please follow the specific instructions provided verbally by Dr. Korani or the attending veterinary staff if they differ from this general guide.**

1. Confinement and Activity Restriction

Strict rest and restricted movement are the single most important factors for successful healing and preventing complications like incisional damage or internal suture failure.

- **Strict Confinement:** Your pet must be **strictly confined** for **10–14 days** (or as directed by Dr. Korani). This means:
 - Crate rest or confinement to a small, secure, non-slip room when unsupervised.
 - **Absolutely no running, jumping, playing, or roughhousing.**
 - Avoid stairs entirely. If necessary, you must **carry your pet** up and down.
- **Leash Walks Only:** When outside, your pet must be on a **short, controlled leash** and held close. Only go outside for brief, controlled bathroom breaks.

2. Incision Site Care and Monitoring

Protection of the incision site is vital to prevent infection and the incision from opening (dehiscence).

- **E-Collar is Mandatory:** **Do not allow your pet to lick, chew, or rub the incision.** The **E-collar (cone)** or recovery suit must be worn **at all times** until the incision is fully healed or external sutures are removed (usually 10–14 days).
- **Keep it Dry:** Keep the incision **clean and dry**. **No bathing, swimming, or excessive moisture** for 14 days or until cleared by your primary veterinarian.
- **Normal Appearance:** Some mild redness, swelling, and minor bruising around the incision are normal for the first few days.
- **Suture Removal:** You will be instructed on the date for external suture or staple removal, if necessary (typically 10–14 days post-op).

3. 🚨 When to Call for Emergencies

Contact **H&M VetSurg at 415-853-7600** or the nearest Veterinary Emergency Clinic immediately if you observe any of the following critical signs:

- **Excessive redness, swelling, or heat** at the incision site that is worsening rapidly.
- **Discharge** that is thick, yellow, green, or foul-smelling.
- **Significant or continuous bleeding** from the incision.
- The incision line **opening up (dehiscence)**.
- Pale gums, severe difficulty breathing, or sudden collapse.

4. 💊 Medication and Feeding

- **Medication:** Administer all medications, especially **pain relievers, exactly as prescribed**. **Never** give human pain medication (like Tylenol, Advil, or Aleve). Complete the full course of antibiotics if prescribed.
- **Feeding:** Offer a **small, light meal** (about 1/4 of their normal amount) 4–6 hours after arriving home. If vomiting persists or your pet refuses to eat for more than **24–36 hours**, please call us.

5. 🐾 Recognizing and Managing Post-Operative Pain

Vigilant monitoring for signs of discomfort is crucial for a comfortable and quick recovery.

- **Behavioral Signs:** Watch for continuous **whining, groaning, or excessive sighing**. Your pet may be restless and unable to settle down comfortably, or become aggressive, withdrawn, or unwilling to interact.
- **Physical Signs:** Look for a hunched or rigid body posture, or trembling/shaking. **Panting** (rapid, shallow breathing) when the pet is not hot or excited is a common sign of pain.
- **Site-Specific Signs:** **Guarding** the surgical area (snapping or crying out if the site is approached) or **excessive, focused licking/chewing** at the incision are signs that immediate attention is needed.
- **Action:** If moderate to severe pain persists despite medication, **contact us immediately** so Dr. Korani can adjust the pain protocol.

6. Specific Care for Jackson-Pratt (JP) Drains

If your pet has a JP drain, specific daily care is required to maintain its function.

- **Protection:** The E-collar is essential! The bulb must be secured to the pet's body bandage or garment—it **must not be allowed to dangle**.
- **Emptying & Measuring:** Empty the drain **3 to 4 times daily** (or when half full). Always **measure and record** the exact fluid volume and the time it was emptied. This data is critical for determining when the drain can be safely removed.
- **Reactivating Suction:** After emptying, squeeze the empty bulb completely flat to expel air. While holding it flat, replace the plug securely. Release the bulb; it should remain compressed and flat, confirming the vacuum (suction) is working.
- **Drain Clogs (Milking):** If fluid stops flowing, you may need to "**milk**" the drain. Firmly pinch the tubing close to the skin, then use the thumb and index finger to slide firmly down the tube toward the bulb, pushing any clot into the bulb.
- **Urgent Drain Issues:** Call immediately if: the drain bulb does not maintain suction; the drainage volume suddenly increases or completely stops; or the drain tube is accidentally pulled out.

H&M VetSurg Contact Information

For questions related to the surgery or post-operative instructions provided by **Dr. Hani M Korani, DVM, DACVS-SA**:

- **Phone: 415-853-7600**
- **Email: hmvetsurg@gmail.com**