

Femoral Head Ostectomy (FHO) Discharge

Instructions: Cat

Provided by your Primary Veterinary Clinic on behalf of H&M VetSurg

Clinic Name/Phone: [Primary Clinic: Insert Name and Phone Number Here]

Patient: [Pet's Name] **Procedure:** Femoral Head Ostectomy (FHO) **Surgeon:** Hani M Korani, DVM, DACVS-SA

Your cat has undergone a successful FHO procedure performed by Dr. Korani. This surgery removes the head and neck of the femur to relieve pain by creating a stable, functional false joint. Your dedication to strict home care is the most critical factor in your cat's recovery.

1. General Anesthesia Recovery

Your cat has received general anesthesia and advanced pain control. They may still be groggy, unsteady, and irritable for the next 12–24 hours.

- **Confinement:** Keep your cat confined in a small, quiet, secure space (like a large crate or a small room) for the first **10–14 days**. This space should be easily accessible, warm, and away from other pets or small children.
- **Litter Box:** Use a low-sided litter box during the recovery period so your cat doesn't have to jump or step over high edges. Consider using shredded paper or a dust-free, non-clumping litter to prevent dust or debris from irritating the incision site.
- **Feeding:** Offer small amounts of food and water when you return home. If your cat vomits, remove food and water and offer ice chips. If vomiting persists for more than 12 hours, please contact your primary veterinarian immediately.

2. Pain Management & Medications

Pain control is essential for recovery, as it allows your cat to start using the leg, which is necessary for successful rehabilitation.

- **Prescribed Medications:** You must administer all medications exactly as prescribed. Do not stop giving pain medication unless instructed by your veterinary team.
 - **Anti-Inflammatory (NSAID):** [Name of NSAID, e.g., Meloxicam] – [Dose and Frequency]
 - **Pain Relief (Opioid/Other):** [Name of other medication, e.g., Gabapentin] – [Dose and Frequency]
 - **Antibiotic (If prescribed):** [Name of antibiotic] – [Dose and Frequency]
- **Crucial Warning: NEVER** give your cat human medication, including Tylenol (Acetaminophen), Advil (Ibuprofen), or Aleve (Naproxen). These are toxic and potentially fatal.

3. Incision and Suture Care

The incision is located on the side of the hip. **Do not clean, rub, or apply any ointment** to the incision site unless specifically directed by the surgeon.

- **Licking Prevention (E-Collar): The Elizabethan collar (cone) is mandatory.** Your cat **must** wear the cone at all times for a minimum of **10–14 days** until the incision is fully healed. Licking is the most common cause of infection and incision breakdown.
- **Daily Inspection:** Check the incision site twice daily.
 - **Normal:** Slight redness, mild swelling, and minor bruising are common. A small, firm lump beneath the incision is also normal and indicates the dissolving of buried sutures.
 - **Abnormal:** Contact your primary veterinarian immediately if you notice **excessive bleeding or drainage, a foul odor, the incision opening up, or severe redness and heat.**
- **Bathing:** Do not bathe your cat or allow the incision to get wet until after your final recheck appointment.

4. 🧑 FHO Rehabilitation (The Most Important Step)

For an FHO to be successful, your cat must start using the leg almost immediately. This encourages the formation of a smooth, supportive false joint and prevents severe muscle loss.

Phase 1: Early Use (Days 1–5)

- **Rest vs. Use:** Keep your cat confined but gently encourage them to use the limb to stand and walk short distances to the food/litter box within their confinement area.
- **Passive Range of Motion (PROM):** Your veterinarian will instruct you on how to perform gentle PROM exercises. This typically involves gently bending and straightening the hip 3–5 times, 3–4 times per day, starting on Day 3. **Only perform PROM exercises if specifically demonstrated to you.**

Phase 2: Controlled Activity (Days 6–14)

- **Increased Movement:** As comfort improves, encourage them to walk more often within their secure room.
- **Sitting/Standing:** Encourage activities that make them shift weight onto the operated limb, such as sitting up from a lying position.

Phase 3: Gradual Return (Weeks 3+)

- Activity will be gradually increased based on the 14-day recheck. Physical rehabilitation and increased duration of controlled activity will be crucial for the following 4–8 weeks.

5. 🚨 Emergency Warning Signs (Call Immediately)

Please contact **your primary veterinary clinic** or your nearest emergency veterinary clinic immediately if you observe any of the following:

- Uncontrolled or profuse bleeding from the incision site.
- Pale white or blue gums.
- Severe difficulty breathing or continuous coughing/gagging.
- Refusal to eat or drink for more than 24 hours.
- Persistent vomiting or bloody diarrhea.
- Extreme pain that is not alleviated by medication.



6. Follow-Up Appointments

Appointment	When	Purpose
Incision Check	10–14 Days Post-Surgery	Incision evaluation and removal of external sutures/staples (if applicable). Starting or adjusting physical therapy plan.
Radiograph/Recheck	6–8 Weeks Post-Surgery	Full orthopedic exam to assess mobility and final surgical site stability.

Post-Surgical Support

For all routine questions, medication refills, or urgent concerns, please contact **your primary veterinary clinic** at the number listed above.

H&M VetSurg (Specialist Contact): Dr. Korani is available for specific surgical complications or specialist consultation via your primary veterinarian.

- **Specialist Phone:** 415-853-7600
- **Specialist Email:** dr.korani@hmvetsurg.com