

Your Guide to

Managing Patella Luxation

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HYDRO & VETERINARY PHYSIO

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Contents

What is patella luxation, and why does my dog have it? 4
- What causes the patella to luxate? 5
- Grades of Patella Luxation 7
- A note on osteoarthritis and other conditions 7

Recognizing the signs of patella luxation 8

Diagnosing patella luxation 9

What are the best ways to treat patella luxation? 10

Conservative management for Patella Luxation 12
- Maintaining a healthy body weight 12
- Dietary joint support 13
- Pain management 14
- Physical rehabilitation 14
- Therapeutic exercise and strengthening 16
- 3 exercises to strengthen the quadriceps and hindquarters 17

Surgical management for Patella Luxation 20
- Tibial Tuberosity Transposition 20
- Recession Sulcoplasty 20
- Femoral Varus Osteotomy 21
- Soft Tissue Reconstruction 21

How can you help your dog recover from surgery 22
- Prepare Your Home Environment 22
- A Rest Area 23
- Equip Yourself 25

Consider Diet 26

Tips for reducing stress during restricted activity 27
- Mental Stimulation 27

Three exercises you can use during recovery 30

Conclusion 33

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What is patella luxation, and why does my dog have it?

The patella (kneecap) sits inside the tendon of the quadriceps muscles as they cross over the front of the femur to insert on the front edge of the tibia. It is the largest sesamoid bone in your dog's body and plays a crucial role in extending the stifle (knee) joint.

During normal movement, the patella slides up and down within the trochlear groove on the front of the femur as the stifle flexes and extends, acting as a fulcrum.

A luxating patella occurs when the patella slips out of the trochlear groove during movement. This disrupts the extension mechanism and can be painful for your dog.

The patella most commonly dislocates toward the inside of the leg, a condition known as medial patellar luxation (MPL). In some cases, it slips to the outside of the leg, which is referred to as lateral patellar luxation (LPL).



The patella tendon attachment is centered on the tibia, with the patella on the center line travelling through the joint.

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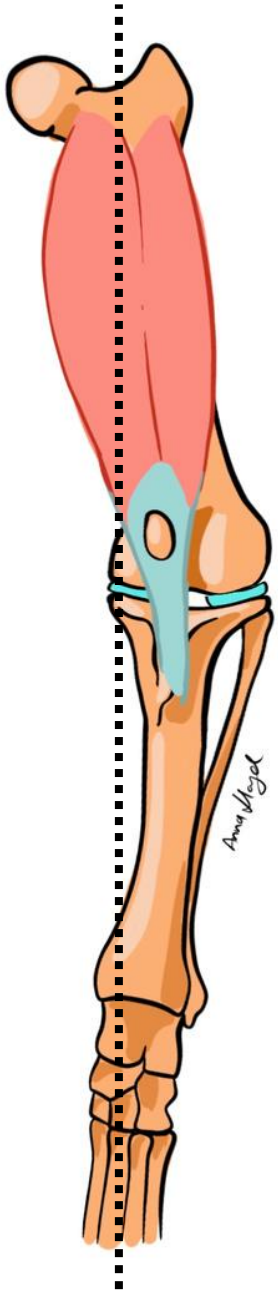
What causes the patella to luxate?

There are three common reasons why a patella may luxate:



The patella tendon attachment is offset to the inside of the tibia, with the patella on the medial side of the line travelling through the joint.

1. A shallow trochlear groove – The trochlear groove on the front of the femur is normally deep enough to keep the patella in place as the knee moves. If the groove is too shallow, the patella does not sit securely and can easily slip out.

2. An off-center attachment of the patellar ligament – The patellar ligament, which connects the patella to the tibia, is usually aligned in the center of the bone. In some dogs, the attachment point is positioned too far to the inside (medially). This misalignment causes the patella to be pulled toward the inside of the leg with every muscle contraction, increasing the likelihood of luxation over time.

3. Bow-legged conformation – Dogs with bowed hind legs have an abnormal limb alignment that places constant inward (medial) pressure on the patella. Over time, this repetitive force can wear down the trochlear groove, making it easier for the patella to luxate.

These three factors are all related to the bone structure of the dog and are genetically determined. In many cases, a dog may have more than one of these anatomical variations at the same time, which increases the likelihood and severity of patellar luxation.

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Breeds commonly affected include small and toy breeds such as Poodles, Yorkshire terriers, Maltese, Chihuahuas, Pekingese, Jack Russell Terriers, Miniature Pinschers, Pomeranians and many more. Although less common, patellar luxation can also occur in medium and large breed dogs.

In rare cases, the patella can luxate due to trauma. When this happens, treatment will depend on the nature of the injury and can affect any breed.

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Grades of Patella Luxation

During diagnosis, patellar luxation is graded based on how easily the patella moves out of place and whether it returns to its normal position.

Grade 1

The patella remains in its groove but can be manually pushed out of place. It returns to its normal position without assistance.

Grade 2

The patella occasionally dislocates on its own but returns to position when the limb is straightened and slightly rotated.

Grade 3

The patella is permanently dislocated but can be manually repositioned.

Grade 4

The patella is permanently dislocated and cannot be repositioned.

A note on osteoarthritis and other conditions

Patellar luxation increases the risk of arthritis in the stifle joint, as well as other orthopedic conditions, such as cranial cruciate ligament (CCL) ruptures. Each time the patella moves out of the trochlear groove, it causes wear on both the patella and the groove, gradually eroding cartilage and contributing to arthritis. This degeneration can lead to pain, inflammation, and worsening gait abnormalities, further accelerating arthritis progression.

Additionally, when the patella is out of its groove, it places rotational stress on the tibia and alters forces on the stifle and hind limb. This can predispose dogs to further injuries, including cranial cruciate ligament ruptures.

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Recognizing the signs of patella luxation

Mild cases of patellar luxation often present with a characteristic **skipping gait.**

Affected dogs may lift a hind limb for one or more strides while running before placing it back down. This may occur with or without noticeable lameness.

Dogs with patellar luxation may have a **rounded lower back** and stand with their hind limbs positioned further under their body than usual. In more severe cases, they may struggle to jump or stand up against objects.

In higher-grade luxations, where the patella is luxated most of the time, dogs may develop a **bow-legged stance** and an abnormal, stiff, or awkward gait.



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Diagnosing patella luxation

Patellar luxation is typically diagnosed through a **physical examination** by a veterinarian.

During the exam, your veterinarian will assess your dog's knee and assign a **luxation grade** based on how easily the patella moves out of place.

To further evaluate the underlying causes, your veterinarian will likely recommend **X-rays** to assess bone alignment and joint structure. In some cases, **advanced imaging** such as CT scans or MRI may be necessary, particularly if surgery is being considered as a treatment option. The type of imaging required will depend on the severity of the condition and the most appropriate treatment approach for your dog.



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What are the best ways to treat patella luxation?

The treatment approach for patellar luxation depends on the severity of the condition.

Non-Surgical Management

In mild cases, patellar luxation can be managed without surgery. The focus is on maintaining joint health, reducing strain on the knee, and strengthening the surrounding muscles. Key aspects of management include:

- **Maintaining a healthy body weight** to prevent excess strain on the joints.
- **Environmental modifications** to minimize slipping or excessive jumping.
- **Dietary joint support**, including supplements such as glucosamine and omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Pain management**, if necessary, under veterinary guidance.
- **Therapeutic exercise and strengthening** to improve muscle support around the knee.
- **Physical rehabilitation** to enhance mobility and function.
- **Hydrotherapy**, which provides low-impact strengthening and joint support.



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Surgical Management

For higher-grade luxations, surgery may be the most effective option. The goal of surgery is to stabilize the patella and correct underlying anatomical issues. Procedures aim to:

- **Relocating the patellar ligament attachment** to improve alignment.
- **Deepening the trochlear groove** to keep the patella securely in place.
- **Correcting quadriceps alignment** to improve overall limb mechanics.
- **Tightening or releasing soft tissues** to provide additional stability.



Let's explore each treatment approach in more detail.



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Conservative Management for Patella Luxation

In asymptomatic cases, no treatment may be necessary.

However, for dogs with mild patellar luxation that affects mobility, conservative management can help maintain function and slow disease progression. While it cannot fully correct the condition, it plays a crucial role in managing pain, strengthening the hind limb muscles, and preserving joint health.



Maintaining a healthy body weight

Obesity does not cause patellar luxation, but it can worsen the condition by increasing joint strain, inflammation, and pain while reducing mobility and quality of life. Keeping your dog at a healthy weight is essential for long-term joint health. If your dog is overweight, a structured weight loss program should be a priority.

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Dietary joint support

Dogs with patellar luxation have a higher risk of developing arthritis over time. Joint-supportive supplements can help slow arthritis progression by reducing inflammation and supporting cartilage health.

- **Glucosamine & Chondroitin** – These compounds provide essential building blocks for cartilage repair and maintenance. Many veterinary joint diets already include them. Choose supplements with bioavailable ingredients for optimal absorption.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids (EPA & DHA)** – Found in fish oil, these fatty acids reduce inflammation, protecting joint cartilage from degenerative changes.
- **Green-Lipped Mussel Extract** – Contains chondroitin, glutamine, omega-3s, and antioxidants such as vitamins E and C, all of which support joint health.
- **Curcumin (Turmeric Extract), Boswellia Serrata**, and **Eggshell Membrane** – Natural anti-inflammatory options that may help reduce joint pain and stiffness.



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Pain management

Patellar luxation can cause localized stifle pain as well as secondary discomfort in other areas due to compensatory movement patterns. Pain management can strategies include:

- **Veterinary-prescribed pain medications** when needed.
- **Physical therapy interventions** such as manual therapy, massage, laser, TENS, and rehabilitation exercises.
- **Heat therapy**, using warm packs applied to the stifle before exercise to reduce stiffness and discomfort.

Physical Rehabilitation

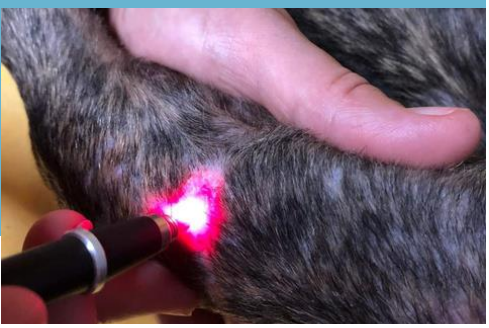
A dedicated rehabilitation therapist plays a vital role in managing pain and strengthening the hindquarter muscles to support proper patellar alignment and function. Various therapeutic modalities can be used to alleviate discomfort and enhance mobility, including massage, manual therapies, laser therapy, transcutaneous electrical neuromuscular stimulation (TENS), acupuncture, ultrasound, and hydrotherapy.

Massage Therapy



Regular massage can significantly improve pain and function. A luxating patella often leads to muscle tension, spasms, and trigger points, disrupting blood supply and causing a buildup of metabolic waste. Massage helps restore circulation, flush out waste products, and relax tight muscles, improving comfort and mobility.

Laser Therapy



Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT) delivers a focused beam of light at a specific wavelength that is absorbed by cells within the body, triggering biochemical reactions that promote healing, reduce inflammation, and alleviate pain. This therapy can be particularly beneficial for dogs with patellar luxation by decreasing inflammation around the stifle joint, easing muscle tension, and slowing the progression of arthritis.

TENS Therapy



TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Neuromuscular Stimulation) therapy delivers electrical pulses that interfere with pain signals traveling to the brain, a mechanism known as the Pain Gate Theory. This reduces discomfort, promotes muscle relaxation, and increases blood flow, ultimately improving normal muscle function.

Acupuncture



Acupuncture is an effective pain relief technique when performed by a qualified professional. Fine needles are inserted into specific points to stimulate the body's natural healing and pain-relieving mechanisms. This process triggers the release of anti-inflammatory mediators and endorphins, helping to reduce muscle spasms and alleviate discomfort. Most dogs tolerate acupuncture well and often relax or even sleep during the treatment.

Hydrotherapy



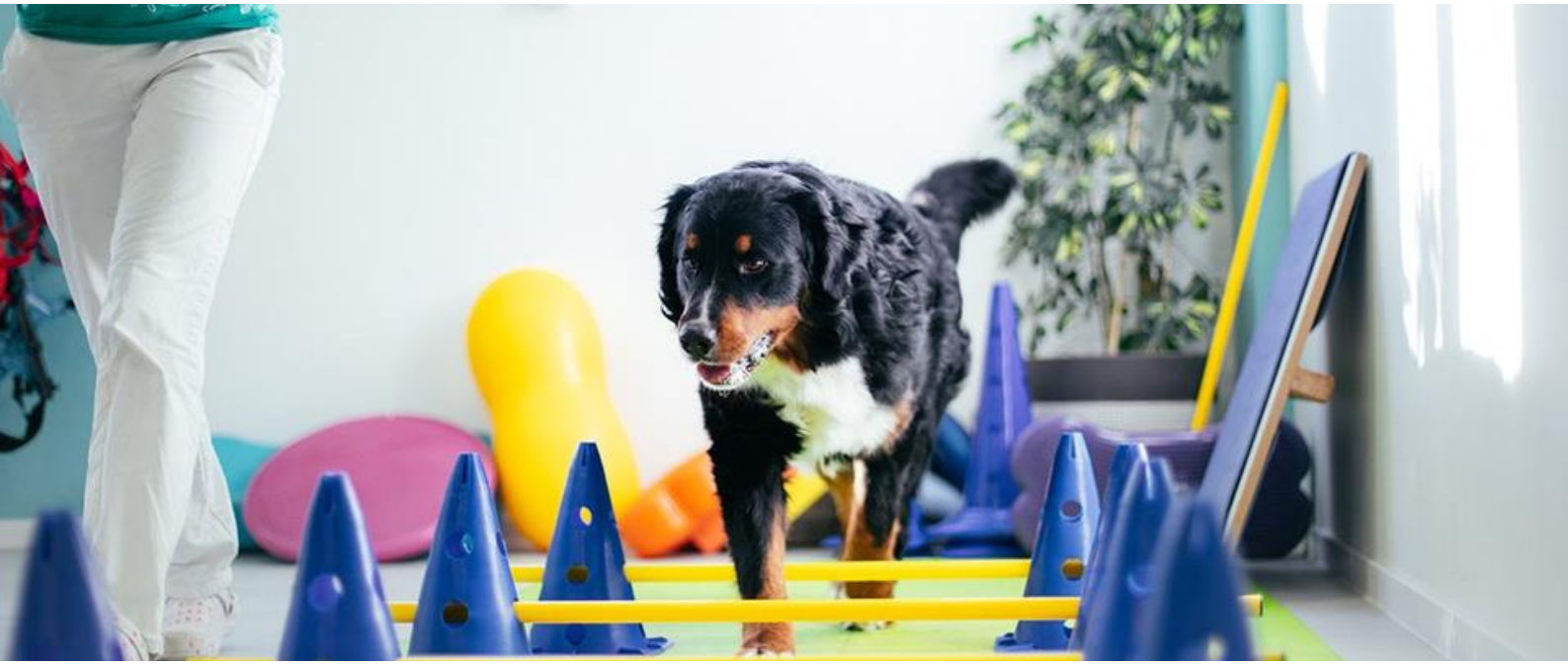
Hydrotherapy offers a **low-impact, high-resistance** exercise environment that may be beneficial for patellar luxation. The buoyancy of water reduces joint stress while providing resistance for muscle strengthening.

Two primary hydrotherapy methods can be used:

- **Swimming** – Encourages full-body muscle engagement with no joint impact.
- **Underwater Treadmill Walking** – Supports controlled weight-bearing exercises, promoting proper limb movement and strengthening.

Each dog responds differently to hydrotherapy, and hydrotherapy may not be appropriate for every dog with patella luxation. Before beginning a program, it's crucial to assess whether the patella remains stable within its groove during water-based exercises.

Therapeutic exercise and strengthening



A proper strengthening program is a cornerstone in the conservative management of patella luxation. In dogs with low-grade luxation, muscle weakness and ligament laxity around the patella and stifle joint are major contributors to the severity of the condition. Once an effective pain management plan is in place, it's essential to focus on actively strengthening the hindquarters and the muscles associated with the patella. This includes the quadriceps, hamstrings, and gluteal muscles.

When selecting exercises for your dog, it's crucial to ensure that the patella remains in its groove, or does not luxate, throughout the movement. This is important because the goal is to strengthen the muscles supporting the patella in its correct biomechanical position. If exercises allow the patella to luxate, it can lead to further wear of the trochlear groove, worsening the luxation and accelerating the progression of arthritis.

NOTE: To check if the patella is luxating during an exercise, gently place your hand over the front of the stifle. As your dog moves, you should be able to distinctly feel the patella slipping to the side.

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3 exercises to strengthen the quadriceps and hindquarters

Single Leg Lift

This exercise helps challenge your dog's stability by encouraging muscle contraction in a weightbearing position, which stabilizes the limb and maintains standing posture. There is a low risk of patella luxation, as the stifle joint remains stationary while the muscles contract.

1. Ask your dog to stand next to you in a square position, with their head facing forward. You can use a treat in one hand to keep their focus and attention directed ahead.
2. With your second hand, gently flex your dog's front foot until it lifts off the ground. Ensure that your dog does not lean on your hand but instead rebalances themselves, shifting their weight off the foot you're holding. You should see their weight shift backward and the muscles in their hindquarter contract.
3. Hold the position for 3-5 seconds.
4. Gently lower the foot back to the ground.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 with the opposite front leg.
6. Gently lift the hindlimb closest to you off the floor by bringing the toes into flexion. Your dog should not lean their weight on your hand but instead shift their weight to the opposite leg.
7. Gently lower the foot back to the ground.
8. Repeat steps 6-7 with the opposite hindleg.
9. Continue lifting each leg 3-5 times, until you see your dog beginning to fatigue.

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Assisted Sit-to-Stand

This exercise introduces active flexion and extension of the stifle joint within a limited range of motion, reducing the risk of patella luxation during movement. It is excellent for strengthening both the quadriceps and hamstring muscle groups in the hindquarters.

For this exercise, you will need a stable, raised platform about the height of your dog's knees that won't move when your dog sits on it. A small step or balance pad is ideal, depending on your dog's size. Alternatively, you may be able to ask them to sit on your lap or leg with the help of another person, depending on their size.

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1. Ask your dog to stand in front of the raised platform, with their hindfeet nearly touching it.
2. Using a treat, guide your dog to sit by bringing the treat towards them, encouraging them to shift their weight back onto the platform. Their hindquarters should land on the step, while their hindfeet remain on the floor.
3. To encourage them to stand, place a hand on their chest or collar to keep their weight back. Ask them to push themselves up using their hindlegs, rather than pulling forward with their forelimbs.
4. Repeat the sit-to-stand exercise 3-5 times, or until signs of fatigue appear.



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Backing Up

This exercise strengthens the hindquarters through an active movement with minimal risk of causing the patella to luxate. When walking forward, the quadriceps activate concentrically at the start of the stride, drawing the limb forward to prepare for weightbearing. In contrast, during a backward movement, this pattern is reversed, and the muscles eccentrically contract. This reduces the likelihood of patella luxation, while also naturally increasing the load on the hindlimbs, making it an excellent tool for hindquarter strengthening.

1. Stand in front of your dog, holding a treat at nose level.
2. Take a step toward your dog, prompting them to step backward using a cue.
3. Encourage your dog to take a few steps backward. You can reward them after each step and then repeat.
4. If your dog starts stepping sideways or places their hind feet too wide, create a narrow channel next to the wall using a piece of furniture (like a couch or side table). This will help guide your dog to step straight.



NOTE: Always avoid exercises that cause the patella to luxate. Every dog is different, and even though the exercises listed above are lower-risk, some risk remains. I highly recommend working with a veterinary rehabilitation therapist to create a tailored exercise program suited to your dog's specific needs.

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Surgical Management for Patella Luxation

Dogs experiencing lameness, pain, reduced mobility, or a diminished quality of life due to patella luxation may require surgical intervention to correct the alignment of the bones and improve patella function. Several surgical procedures can help restore proper alignment and address the underlying issues. Below are some common options:



Tibial Tuberosity Transposition

This surgery focuses on correcting the insertion point of the patella tendon. The tibial tuberosity, where the patella tendon attaches, is cut and repositioned to allow optimal alignment. The tendon is reattached with a pin, and a wire is used to anchor the bone in a direction opposite to the pull of the quadriceps muscle, ensuring proper tendon alignment.

Recession Sulcoplasty

This procedure deepens the trochlear groove to improve patella stability. The surgeon removes a wedge of cartilage and bone, then deepens the groove before repositioning the wedge into the newly deepened recess, resulting in a recessed trochlear groove. This helps prevent further dislocation and protects the joint cartilage.

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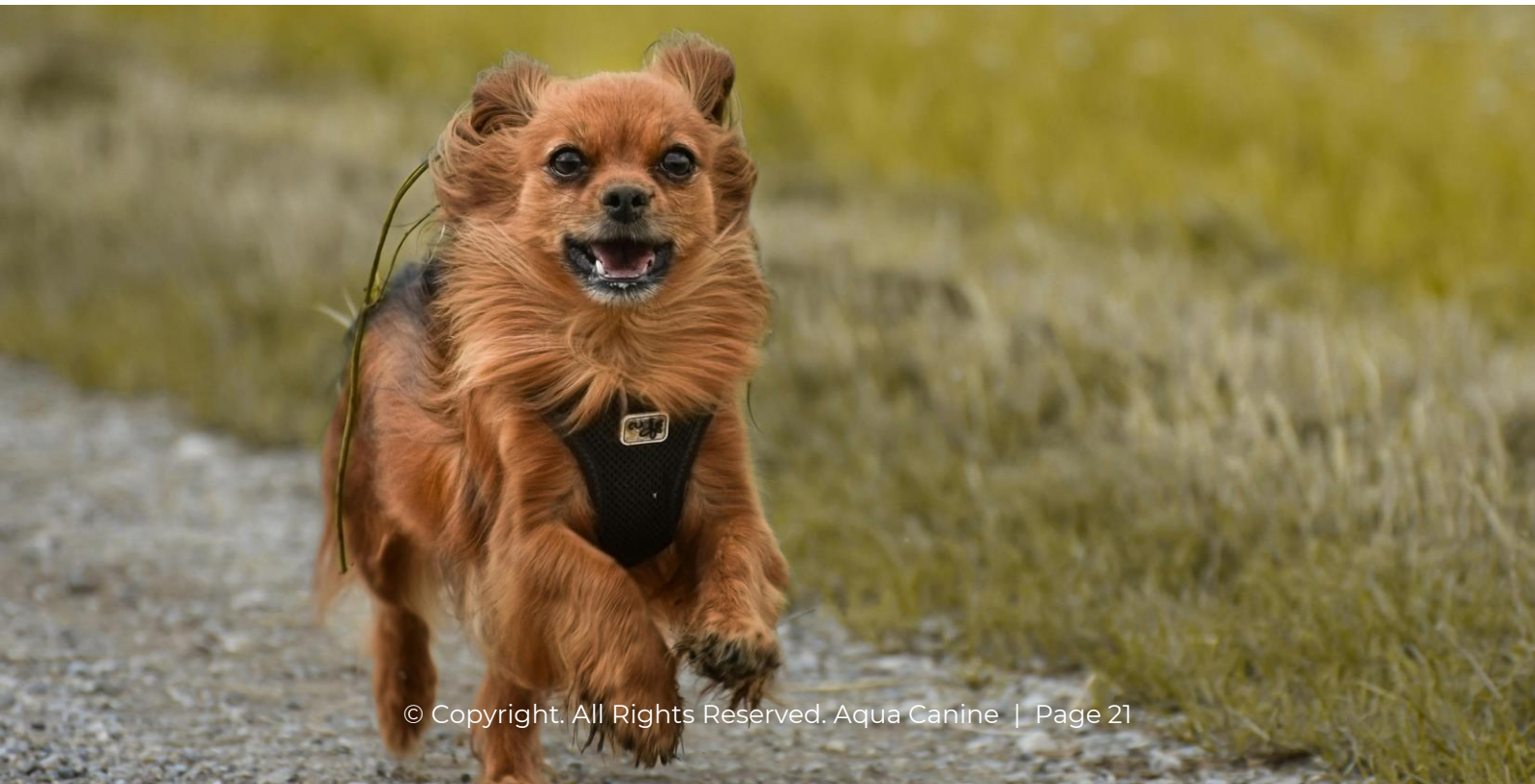
Femoral Varus Osteotomy

In cases of severe femoral bowing, this surgery corrects the alignment of the femur. A wedge of bone is removed from the femur to straighten the bone, and then the femur is stabilized with a plate and screws. This procedure may require a three-dimensional correction, making CT scans essential for precise surgical planning.

Soft Tissue Reconstruction

This surgery addresses the tension in the joint capsule and surrounding soft tissues. It often involves tightening the soft tissues on one side of the patella while lengthening those on the opposite side to restore proper balance and alignment. This procedure can help improve patella stability and prevent further luxation.

Each of these surgical approaches aims to restore normal joint mechanics and improve your dog's overall function and quality of life, particularly when conservative treatments have not been successful. Your veterinary surgeon will determine the best approach based on your dog's specific condition and needs.



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How Can You Best Help Your Dog Recover from Surgery?

If surgery is the best treatment option for your dog, you will need to prepare both yourself and your home environment for their recovery. The routines and activities you implement in the weeks following surgery will play a significant role in how quickly and successfully your dog recovers. The guidelines for recovery will be provided by your vet, and you should always follow their post-op instructions. If there are any discrepancies between their guidelines and the advice below, discuss them with your vet to ensure the best recovery path for your dog.

Let's explore how you can prepare your home and what steps you can take to support a full recovery.

Prepare Your Home Environment

This surgery focuses on correcting the insertion point of the patella tendon. The tibial tuberosity, where the patella tendon attaches, is cut and repositioned to allow optimal alignment. The tendon is reattached with a pin, and a wire is used to anchor the bone in a direction opposite to the pull of the quadriceps muscle, ensuring proper tendon alignment.



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A Rest Area

Crate rest is often recommended during recovery to control your dog's activity, promote healing, and prevent injury. Your rest area will depend on your dog, your home, and your needs. Consider the following options:

1. **Crate:** This is the safest and most restrictive option, especially for active dogs. If your dog is crate-trained, it's the ideal space to limit their movement, preventing them from jumping or running.





2. **Playpen:** A playpen can be an alternative, provided your dog won't be tempted to jump over the sides. This option works well for small dogs and can be expanded over time as your dog's mobility improves.

3. **Small Room:** For calm dogs that are naturally restful, a small room can be a good alternative. Ensure the floor is non-slip and remove furniture that could tempt your dog to jump onto it. This setup is often best for large dogs.



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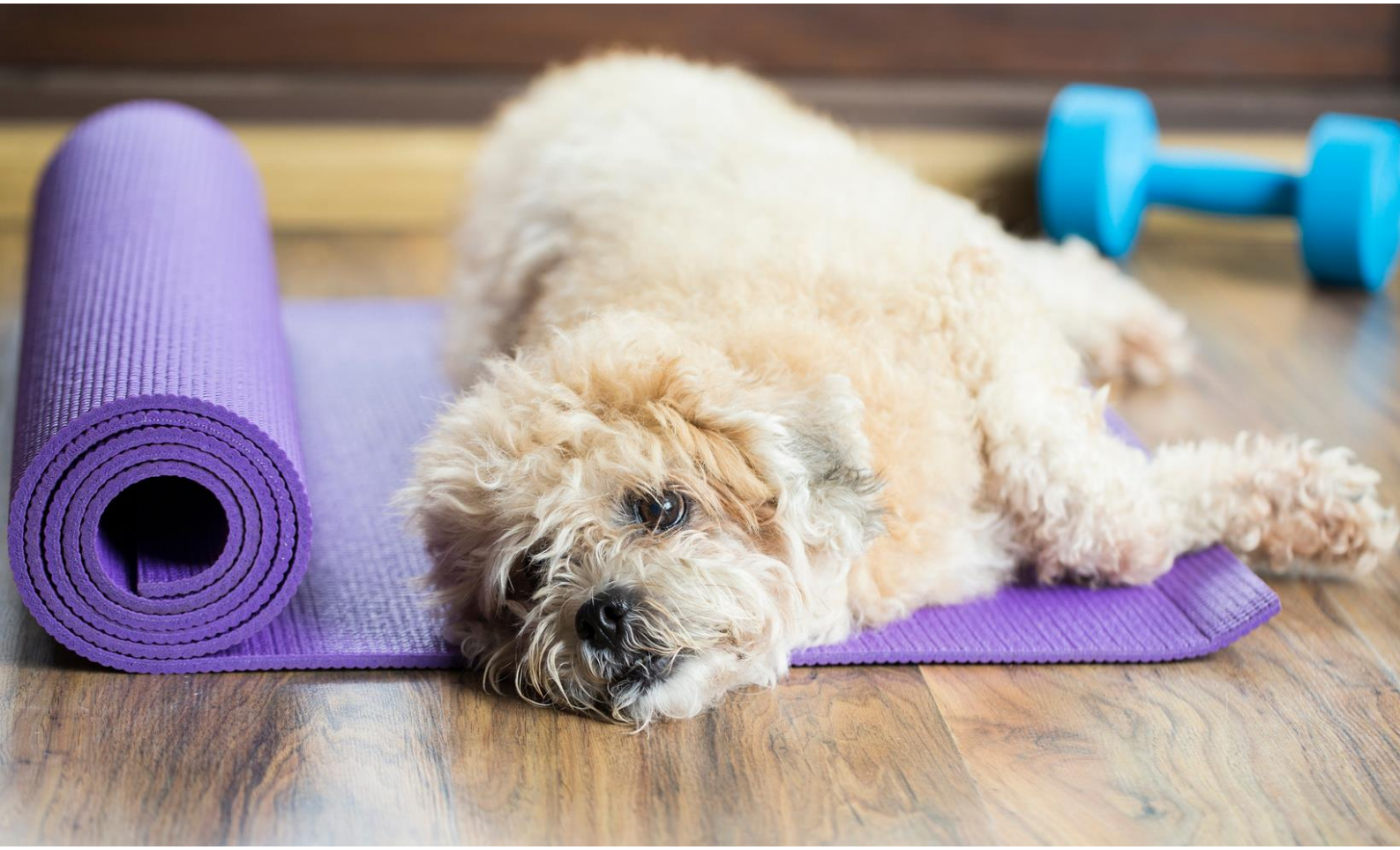
Factors to Consider

When deciding on the best space for your dog, think about your daily routine. If you work from home, placing your dog's bed or crate next to your desk allows you to monitor them closely throughout the day. If you're away for long periods, a crate would be a safer option.

Ensure the pathway from their rest area to outside is short and easy to navigate. Avoid stairs, slippery floors, or narrow hallways that may make it difficult for you to assist your dog.



Consider your dog's reaction to household activity. If they enjoy watching the world outside, placing their bed or crate near a window may help keep them calm. However, if they get excited by outdoor activity, it's better to position them away from the window to minimize stimulation. Additionally, think about the flooring in your home. Slippery surfaces can make it difficult for your dog to move safely. If your floors are slippery, lay down carpets, runners, or yoga mats to provide traction.

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Equip Yourself

Having the right equipment will help ensure a smoother recovery for your dog. Here are some essential items:

Heat and Ice Packs



These will play a major role in managing your dog's pain. Heat promotes blood flow and helps alleviate stiffness, while ice reduces swelling and inflammation. Use heat before exercise to warm up the muscles and ice afterward to manage pain and swelling. Non-rigid ice packs can be molded to your dog's leg for more comfort, and heat packs large enough to cover the knee and upper leg will be beneficial.

Comfortable Harness



Your dog should always be on a lead when leaving the house during recovery. A well-fitted H-harness provides better support than a collar, especially in the early stages when your dog may still be in pain. It helps take some of the weight off your dog's body while they heal.

Comfortable Bed



A supportive, easy-to-access bed is crucial for your dog's recovery. Choose a bed that is flat, firm, and comfortable. Orthopedic beds are a great investment, especially for larger or older dogs, or those with arthritis. These beds provide lasting support and will benefit your dog throughout their life.

By setting up the right environment and having the right tools on hand, you'll help ensure a smoother, faster recovery for your dog after surgery.

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Consider Diet

As your dog recovers from surgery, it's important to review their diet to ensure they receive the right nutrients to support healing.



Maintaining an optimal weight is key—it's better for your dog to be slightly lighter than heavier. A healthy body weight will help reduce inflammation, ease pain, and improve recovery outcomes.

Consider adding joint-protective supplements to their diet, as these can help delay the onset of arthritis and reduce its severity. Joint health should be a priority, as arthritis often develops in the affected joint over time. Speak to your vet or vetrehabber for tailored advice on dietary recommendations during recovery.

Additionally, use mealtime as an opportunity for mental stimulation. Simple targeting exercises or brain games during meals can engage your dog's mind while they're confined to crate rest. Interactive toys like Kongs can provide entertainment and extend mealtime, giving your dog an enjoyable distraction. You might also want to explore switching to a raw diet or adding raw elements to their meals for variety. Consult with your vet or vetrehabber to find the best dietary plan for your dog during this recovery period.

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Tips for Reducing Stress During Restricted Activity

For an active dog, being confined to crate rest for an extended period can be challenging. Fortunately, there are several strategies to help manage your dog's energy and reduce stress during this time.

Mental Stimulation

While physical exercise is limited, mental stimulation can provide a great substitute. Mental games are highly engaging and can help drain excess energy, leaving your dog calm and ready to rest. Not only are these activities fun, but they also offer you the opportunity to bond with your dog during their recovery.

Environment

Your dog’s environment can be a powerful tool for mental stimulation. Place their crate or bed in an area where they can stay connected with the household. A central location where they can observe family members or near a window to watch outdoor activity can help maintain their interest. This can keep them entertained and help reduce anxiety during their rest period.



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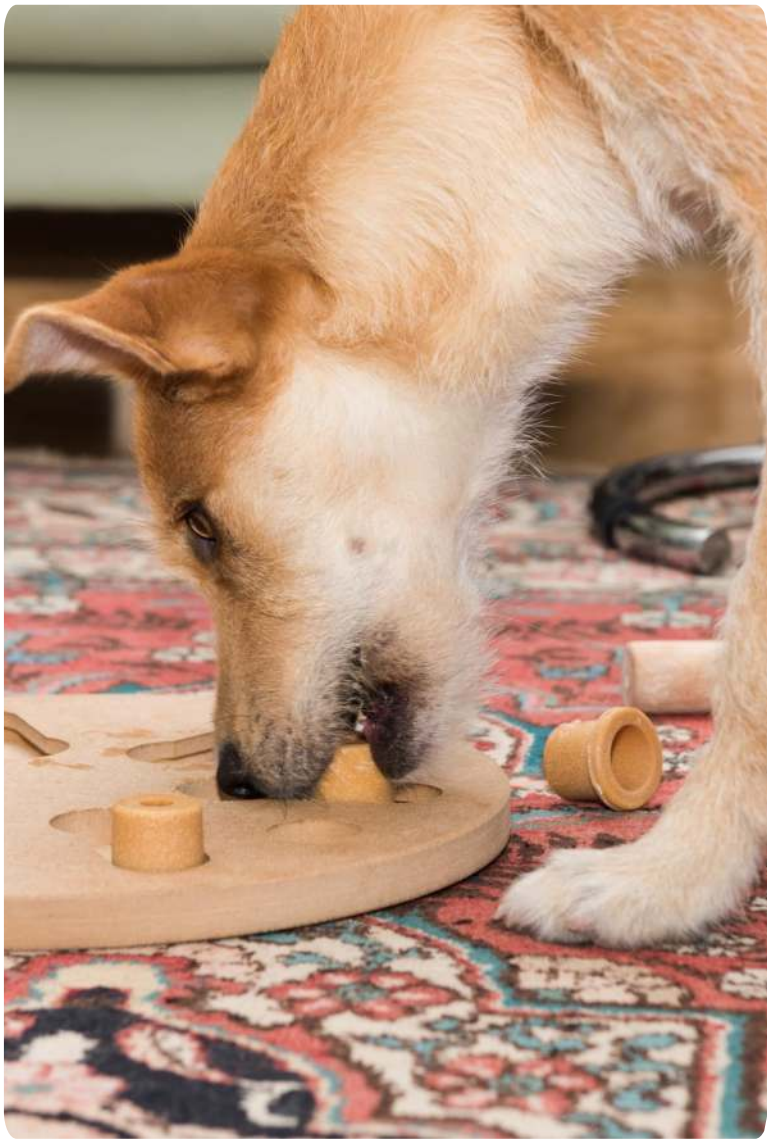
Food and Food Puzzles

Meals can become a fun, stimulating activity. You can divide their food into smaller portions throughout the day and present it using a food puzzle, snuffle mat, or slow-release toy. You can also make feeding time more engaging by freezing portions of food in ice blocks during hot weather, or create homemade puzzles using items like egg cartons or muffin trays with tennis balls blocking the food openings. These puzzles will challenge your dog to figure out how to get to their food, providing both mental stimulation and enjoyment. There are also many commercially available food puzzles, ranging from easy to challenging, which may become a new favorite in your household.



Fresh raw bones are another great way to keep your dog busy and mentally engaged. However, consult your vet for safe raw bone options before adding them to your dog's enrichment routine.



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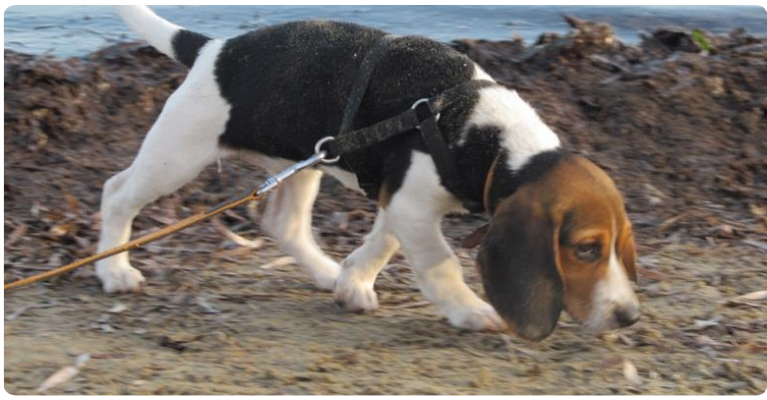
Training Games



You can use small portions of food to engage in simple training games. Start by teaching your dog to target your hand, a tennis ball, or a block with their nose or paws. The beauty of targeting is that you can begin this training in the first two weeks of recovery and gradually integrate it into your dog's rehabilitation exercises in the weeks that follow. This makes your dog an active participant in their healing process, provides you with measurable progress markers, and offers both physical and mental challenges that are exhausting in a good way.



Nose work can also be an excellent way to engage your dog's natural sniffing instincts. You can create nose work games in your garden or backyard, turning toilet breaks into stimulating activities. This gives your dog a purpose and provides enjoyment during restricted activity times.



If you're interested in exploring more training options or need guidance, consider reaching out to your vet rehab therapist. They can provide recommendations for trainers or specific techniques to help you engage your dog effectively during recovery.

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Three exercises you can use during post-op recovery

Your vet and vet rehab therapist will guide you during the rehabilitation period on which exercises are best for your dog and their recovery. Every dog is different and will need a personalised approach, but here are three safe exercises you can try, to start your rehabilitation journey.

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1 Passive Range of Motion

During the initial phases of recovery, it will be painful for your dog to fully flex and extend their stifle joint. For our joints to remain healthy, movement is really important. Passive range of motion allows you to take your dog's stifle joint through its most comfortable range, reducing pain, inflammation and swelling, and ultimately helping it to heal better. As you practice moving your dog's joint through its available range, you will find they become more able to take their limb through larger ranges themselves during movement.



Passive range of motion of the stifle requires that your dog is lying flat on his side in a relaxed position, and that you gently open and close the angles of his joints with your hands. Please ask your vet or rehab therapist to demonstrate this to you, and to practice it with you before you do it at home.

2 Weight Shifting

Simple weight shifting exercises allow you to encourage activation of the stabilising muscles in each limb, in a safe way. It can also encourage your dog to place more weight on their surgical limb.



With your dog standing in a comfortable position as close to square as they can, place your hands on either side of their shoulders and gently rock them from side to side. Your rocking motion should remain small enough that they don't need to take a step to rebalance, and big enough so that you can see them shift their weight and activate the muscles in their shoulders.

Repeat the same rocking motion with your hands on either side of their hips, and then repeat the rocking in a diagonal direction from the front of one shoulder to the opposite hip.

3 Intentional lead walking

For the weeks ahead, your dog is going to spend all of their outside time on a lead to ensure that they stay safe during activity. It's a great idea to make the most of that time – it doesn't have to be a boring, negative experience for either of you. Rather it can provide an opportunity for a closer connection, better understanding, and ultimately a more positive future for you and your dog.

There is a fundamental difference between going for a walk on a lead for five minutes, and taking a five-minute sniffing/toilet break. Both will be applicable during your dog's recovery, but it's important for you to recognise when you might just relax and let your dog take the lead (excuse the pun), spending time sniffing and wandering around the garden, and when to intentionally walk your dog for the purpose of strengthening their leg.

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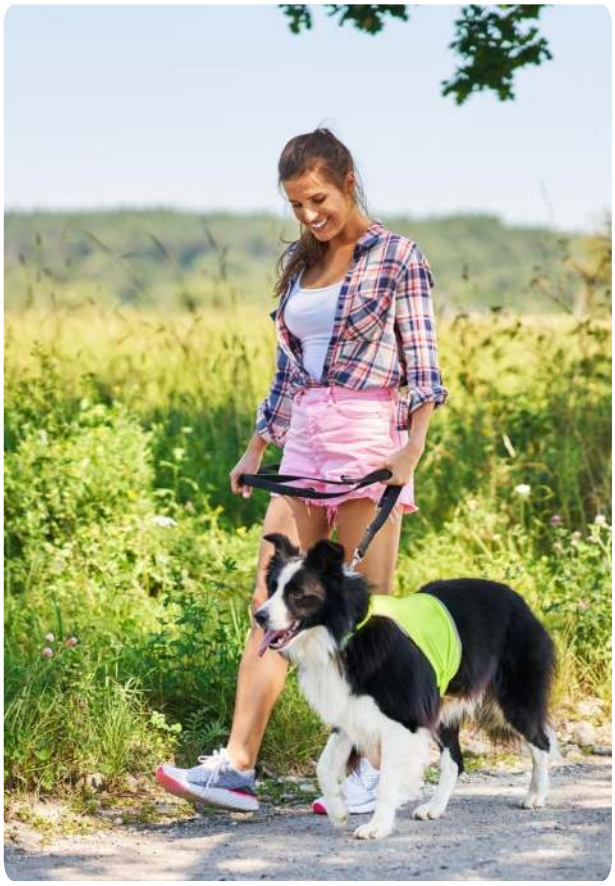
On wandering walks, where your dog takes the lead and sniffs and snuffles around the garden or on the sidewalk, the dog determines the speed and direction. This is great, as it enables you to watch them move naturally and evaluate how they use their limbs, and allows the dog to warm up the muscles after being restricted for a few hours. This should be all you do on the first walk in the morning, and the last one in the evening, as well as for the first two or three minutes of each time out of the crate. During the first two weeks of recovery, this will be the normal walk for you, with potentially two to three minutes of intentional walking from Week 2.



During intentional walks, you want to make sure that you direct speed and direction, and that they maintain their focus on you and the activity. Incorporating positive reinforcement or simple lead walking exercises is a great way to do this. Ask your dog to slow down their walk as much as possible – the slower they walk, the easier it will be for them to place weight on the painful limb. If you find them lifting the limb more, stop and then start walking again. You might also ask your dog to sit down before continuing to walk again if they are struggling to use the limb. Try to maintain mostly straight lines and gentle wide turns in the beginning.

Slow and straight, encouraging them to place weight on the limb, is key. You don't want to be pulling on their lead during this time. Having their focus and attention on you can help to reduce pulling.

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Conclusion



Managing patella luxation, whether through surgery or conservative methods, can be a challenging journey for both you and your dog. With the right care, appropriate exercises, and attention to your dog's overall well-being, you can support their recovery and improve their quality of life. Every dog is unique, and personalized care tailored to their specific needs is key to achieving the best outcomes.

If you're looking for expert guidance on managing your dog's condition—whether through rehabilitation techniques, dietary advice, or creating a customized treatment plan—I'm here to help. Together, we can ensure your dog's best possible recovery and keep them comfortable, active, and happy.

Feel free to book an appointment with me to discuss how we can support your dog's journey to recovery and optimal health. Let's work together to help your dog thrive!

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Kirsty Hamilton

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