



COMPANION PET CARE

[info@companionpcvet.com](mailto:info@companionpcvet.com)

760-942-1220

## Cruciate Rupture - TTA Surgery Recovery<sup>1</sup>

**\*\*IMPORTANT!** Your pet should be confined to indoors and taken outside on a leash only for eliminations for **12 - 16 WEEKS** or until healing of the bone is confirmed via x-rays. Do not allow your pet to run off leash until fully recovered. Otherwise, soft tissue injuries can be expected during recovery.

### Preparing the House

It is important to have a plan on how and where you are going to restrict or confine your dog during this crucial post-operative period. Quality rest is as important as having a good therapy plan. Many owners incorporate one to the following:

- Dog crate
- Gated-off area, i.e., kitchen
- Room confinement

### No Jumping

It is extremely important not to allow your dog to jump. Overextension of the stifle (“knee”) could compromise the repair and slow healing time. Remember:

NO JUMPING on/off bed

NO JUMPING on/off couch

NO JUMPING up on you

### No Stairs

Stairs, like jumping, will overstress the joint and inhibit repair. In the beginning stages, directly after surgery and until your veterinarian says it is okay, it is imperative that you do what you can to prevent your pet from going up and down stairs. However, if you have no way of avoiding stairs to get your dog into and out of the house, or your dog is too big to carry, you need to take the following precautions:

- Restrict: Make sure to have your leash attached before you open the door.
- Support: Use a towel as belly support or commercially available harness or belly support
- Limit: Block off all stairs that your dog could potentially have access to.

### No Horsing Around

As much as you would like to play with your dog or have him play with other friends, this is not a good idea until your veterinarian gives you the green light to do so.

### Walking Surfaces

Wood floors, tile, linoleum, etc. can all be very slippery to your recovering pet. Consider putting down some throw rugs with rubber backing or yoga mats to make it easier for your dog.

---

<sup>1</sup>Information in this handout is adapted from [www.topdoghealth.com](http://www.topdoghealth.com). Visit this website for more information on recovery from TTA surgery and detailed step-by-step instructions on rehabilitation exercises at home.

## **At Home Rehabilitation Exercises:**

### **WEEK 1 (Non-weight bearing to toe touching) - Start 3 days after surgery**

1. Moist heat 10 minutes prior to your dog's therapy session
2. Massage- 5-10 minutes, 3-4 times/day
3. Passive Range of Motion (PROM)- 10 repetitions, 3-4 times/day (This is best done after massage and with your pet laying on his/her side. Starting with the hip, gently extend and flex. Continue onto the knee and ankle. Be sure to support the leg carefully with your other hand while performing these movements. Do not force PROM. If your pet seems uncomfortable, stop and try again at another time.)
4. Short and slow controlled walks - 5 minutes, 3-4 times/day
5. Cold Therapy- 10-15 minutes after exercise

### **WEEK 2 (Early weight bearing)– Schedule to have sutures/staples removed this week**

1. Moist heat
2. Massage
3. PROM- 15 repetitions, 3-4 times a day
4. Short and slow controlled leash walks- 5-10 minutes, 3-4 times a day
5. Cold Therapy- 10-15 minutes after exercise

### **WEEK 3 (Early weight bearing)**

1. Moist heat
2. Massage
3. PROM as needed- If your dog is getting out for his walks and is using his leg, you can discontinue
4. Slow controlled leash walks- 15-20 minutes, 3-4 times/day
5. Sit-to-Stand Exercises- 5-7 repetitions, 3-4 times/day (We call these “puppy squats.” Basically, you want to get your dog to sit down and immediately stand back up.)
6. Discontinue Post-Therapy Icing

### **WEEK 4 (Consistent weight bearing)**

1. Moist Heat, as needed
2. Massage, as needed
3. PROM, as needed- discontinue if going out for walks
4. Controlled Leash Walks- Increase to 20 minutes, 3-4 times/day
5. Sit-to-Stand Exercises- Increase to 10 repetitions, 3-4 times/day
6. Figure 8s- 10 repetitions, 3-4 times/day (To perform “Figure 8s,” simply walk as if you are following an imaginary 8 drawn onto the ground.)

### **WEEKS 5-8 (Improved weight bearing at a trot)- Schedule to have x-rays taken at 6-8 wks**

1. Discontinue Moist Heat, PROM, and massage
2. Controlled Leash Walks with Hill Work- walks for 20-30 minutes, 3-4 times/day and hill work for 5-10 minutes, 1-2 times/day
3. Sit-to-Stand Exercises- 10-15 repetitions, 3-4 times/day
4. Figure 8s- 10-20 repetitions, 3-4 times/day
5. Curb Work- 10-20 feet, 3-4 times/day on walks (Curb work is basically stepping up and off a length of curb while on your walk with your dog. While on your walk, simply step up and off the curb for a length of 10 to 20 feet, making an “S” pattern as you walk on and off the curb.)

### **WEEKS 9-12 (Consistent weight bearing at a trot)**

1. Stair work- 5-7 steps in a row, 1-3 times/day (Start with your dog on a leash and, if needed, use a towel under the belly to support him. To start, walk slowly up three stairs, and then slowly walk back down. Increase the number of stairs and the frequency each week. DO NOT give your dog free access to the stairs yet, it is still too early. Always keep your dog on a leash while doing this exercise.)
2. Supervised off-leash or long leash activity
3. Controlled Leash Walks with hill work- 30 minutes total with 10 minutes on hills, 3-4 times/day
4. Sit-to-Stand exercises- 10-15 repetitions, 3-4 times a day
5. Figure 8s- 20 repetitions, 3-4 times/day on walks
6. Curb Work- 20 feet, 3-4 times/day
7. Jogging- Do intervals of 20 feet, 3-4 times/day
8. Swimming- 5-10 minutes, 1-2 times/week (If approved by your veterinarian)

**\*If you notice any signs of lameness or discomfort while increasing any of the abovementioned exercises, revert to the previous week's level of activity.**

**\*Appropriate dietary management is prudent!! Overweight pets have an increased risk of injuring the same ligament in the other leg.**

**-50% of dogs will rupture the opposite cruciate ligament within 1 year.**

**\*We recommend glucosamine joint supplements long term – Dasuquin is our favorite.**