



RESTRICTED ACTIVITY HANDOUT

Restricting your pet's activity to allow for healing will be a challenge, especially when your pet begins to feel better. The following list will help in trying to comply with your veterinarian's instructions. When your pet is allowed more movement, these recommendations will enable you to control your pet's level of activity.

Duration of restriction:

1. **Leash walk only** Your pet should be accompanied on a fixed-length (4-6 foot) leash when outside, even for elimination. Although extendable leashes make exercising easy, it allows too much freedom of movement for a patient on exercise restriction. If your pet runs throughout the house, leash walking inside is also recommended. If your pet has any neck or back problems, the leash should be attached to a harness and avoid use of a neck collar.

2. **Crate use** If you don't have a crate, consider keeping your pet in a small room such as a half bath or laundry room. Since most pets want to be near people, consider keeping the crate near the area you frequent most or is most visible to your pet. This is important while you are away from home, busy at home, and during the night when your pet is not closely supervised.

3. **Controlled indoor activity:**
 - Isolate from other active pets or young children if necessary - Any sudden or quick movements can cause further injury or delay healing, so play with other pets or young children should be prevented.
 - No running or jumping - Please think of all the possible causes for your pet to desire a faster pace and avoid; i.e. running to a window to look outside or the door when the doorbell rings, jumping up and down for attention or off furniture, or getting in and out of vehicles.
 - Avoid slippery floors - Adding rugs or rug runners to tiled or wood floors will improve traction and reduce the likelihood of slipping and falling.
 - No Stairs - please confine your pet to one level of your home. If this is not feasible, your pet should be carried, kept in a crate or small room. If stairs are the only way to access your home, your veterinarian can advise if a sling is appropriate.
 - No car rides - Many muscle groups are used to stabilize a pet's body movements while riding in a vehicle which stops and starts along transport. Please limit to only absolute necessary rides during this time of recovery.

4. **Distractions or mind-occupying activities:** When your pet feels better and desperately wants to be more mobile, you must remain firm and continue to restrict their activity. Stimulate their mind with interactive toys and extend the time of feeding: feed using food puzzles, fill Kong toys with peanut butter or canned food, sometimes freezing these treats offer longer lasting chewing, or spend time on the floor beside your pet.
5. **Medications** Calming medications are available to reduce the stress of confinement and to facilitate calming. NSAIDs and pain medications are important to address inflammation and pain.
6. **Controlled outdoor activity** 5-10 minute leash walks in the driveway or around the block 2-3 times daily. Avoid areas with uneven terrain, ice or snow conditions or steep grades. Once your pet is at the end of <his> recovery, a slow return to normal activity is recommended over 2-3 weeks.

The key thing to remember is that pets do not understand or easily comply with these restrictions. They cannot anticipate what activity may disrupt their recovery or cause more harm nor do they know how much activity is acceptable. It is up to you to restrict their activity, which means that you need to anticipate their reaction and establish safeguards to prevent such occurrences.

Follow-up visits to recheck the healing process can provide you feedback to know if your pet is progressing as anticipated for your pet's specific injury. Please communicate with us any concerns or frustrations that may arise so we can help offer options for your pet.