

Oral Fracture Aftercare Information

Susan Hodge, DVM, DACVS-SA

Surgery Date: _____

Surgery Performed: _____

Convalescent Period: Most pets feel better after the first 7 to 10 days. Please call if you notice any concerns with breathing, or they do not progress as stated. Some blood-tinged saliva is normal and should gradually improve over the first 7-10 days. Please call if you see bleeding that does not appear to stop. Swelling of the lip is normal following surgery and will become more significant if your pet is allowed to do too much activity, rub at the face, or bark. The appearance of a swelling under the tongue either on one or both sides may occur (rannula) and this is caused by inflammation which temporarily obstructs the salivary ducts exit point under the tongue. Most of these swellings resolve with no treatment, they are not painful, and resolve in about 10 days. Please call if you have concerns.

Prognosis: By 8-10 weeks after surgery most fractures have healed, however if your pet had a large defect in the bone it may take longer to heal. After healing takes place your pet should be able to chew normally again.

Medications:

- (X) **Fentanyl patch** (sizes available include 12, 25, 50, 75, & 100 ug patches): This is a clear plastic patch applied to your pet's skin for relief of discomfort or pain control. You will be instructed on when to remove the patch from your pet's skin (usually the date it should be removed will be noted). In most pets, the effects of this patch will work for about 3-5 days total (average of 4 days). It can be disposed of in two ways only, either place the patch in a plastic bag and return it to the office that dispensed it to you for disposal, or fold it in half, and flush it down the toilet. Do not allow pets or people to lick, eat or chew the patch because this may result in intoxication. The effects of the patch take 12-24 hours to either start to work or for the effects of the patch to wear off. Other medications can be used with the patch in place if needed and instructions on adjusting doses should be provided for you.
- (+/-) **Anti-inflammatory medications:** Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID's) include Rimadyl (Novox, Carprofen), Deramaxx, Metacam, Previcox, and others are available in either Brand name or generic forms: (tablet sizes or liquid concentrations vary depending on the product): The dose will be given in terms of the number of tablet(s), partial tablet, or volume of liquid (in mL) needed to be administered by mouth and the frequency will be noted for you (either every 12 or 24 hours) for 10-14 days as needed for pain control. These medications reduce inflammation, pain, and swelling. Do not give any other medications (particularly NOT Aspirin or steroids) with this medicine unless instructed by a veterinarian. Stop administering this medication if you notice any vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, or black tarry stool. The time of the next dose that this medication is due will be noted on your discharge instructions (_____ am/pm). Some doctors prefer that this medication is not started until your pet leaves the hospital and is eating more normally.
- (X) Pain relieving medications: **Tramadol** 50 mg: The dose will be given in terms of the number of tablet(s) or partial tablet needed to be administered by mouth and the frequency will be noted for you (either every 8, or 12 hours) for 10-14 days as needed for pain control. This

medication is an opioid and may cause sedation, mild constipation, or a decreased appetite. These side effects are related to the dose of the medication. Please call your doctor if you have concerns about any side effects. If a Fentanyl patch has been applied to your pet, this medication may not be needed until the patch has been removed, however it can be started with the Fentanyl patch at half the recommended dose (unless already at ¼ tablet dose) if needed. Please call if you have additional questions or concerns.

The first doses are due about 8-12 hours after removal of the Fentanyl patch

OR The time of the next dose that this medication is due will be noted on your discharge instructions (_____ am/pm).

Other: Antibiotics may be administered if needed, depending on the case. The dose will be given in terms of the number of tablet(s)/capsule(s) needed to be administered by mouth and the frequency will be noted for you (either every 12 or 24 hours) for the appropriate number of days. Antibiotics would be used to prevent infection or treat contamination noted at the time of surgery. Any antibiotic may cause nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Most side effects can be minimized by administering the medication with food. The time of the next dose that this medication is due will be noted on your discharge instructions (_____ am/pm).

Other:

** Please note: We do not recommend pulling on the lip during the next 3-4 weeks. If your pet will not take medications easily, please be careful not to pull on this side when administering medications.

Incision: Please check the incision site daily for redness, swelling, pain, discharge, or loss of sutures. Please call if any of these are noted. Do not allow your pet to rub or scratch at the incision/face. Please use the Elizabethan collar obtained from us, your regular veterinarian or a pet supply store to prevent scratching or rubbing of the face. You may need to clean the saliva that may run onto the lower lip/incision with "baby wipes" or a warm moist washcloth 2 to 3 times daily followed by the application of Vaseline or triple antibiotic ointment to this area after the cleansing to prevent a moist rash. With time the drooling should subside and this care may not be needed.

There are no external staples/sutures to be removed, but the incision should still be checked.

There are staples/sutures that need to be removed in about 10-14 days.

Exercise: Limit activity to very short leash walks for bowel and urinary purposes for 2-3 weeks. Never leave your pet off the leash outside. Do not allow jumping, climbing stairs, or roughhousing with other pets or people. Strenuous activity can breakdown the surgical repair, preventing successful recovery.

Short walks are permitted on a leash only (10 minutes maximum). Do not leave your pet off the leash or unattended outside during the time of exercise restriction.

(+/-) Lab/Culture Results: A culture of the area may have been submitted to the lab for testing. These results may take up to 7 days to return. Dr. Hodge will call with the results when they arrive, but please call if you have not heard from her in about 7 days. These results will be faxed to your regular veterinarian.

Nausea is common following General Anesthesia, in case of nausea:

- **FOOD AND WATER:** Large intakes of food and water following a hospital visit are common due to the excitement of returning home. This type of vomiting can often be eliminated by not allowing access to food or water for 2 hours after returning home.
 - o We recommend initially feeding your pet canned or softened food (formed into meatballs/in blended form) for 3-4 weeks. Once your pet has recovered completely (in 3-4 weeks), the consistency of the diet may be returned to what is normal for your pet.
 - o Do not give your pet any hard bones or treats until complete healing has occurred.

A bland diet such as Eukanuba Low Residue, Hill's I/D, or Royal Canine Intestinal diets can be purchased or a home-made diet can be made with a 50:50 mixture of a cooked protein source such as hamburger, turkey, chicken, or cottage cheese (all fat removed) combined with a carbohydrate source such as rice, pasta, or mashed potato. We recommend gradually mixing the regular diet into this bland diet during the first week home.

PLEASE RETURN your pet for Incision check in 10-14 days
 Re-examination 8 weeks
 Follow-up X-ray 8 weeks

Additional Information: Following some fracture corrections, particularly in the mouth where there was an open wound to the mouth, the implants will need to be removed in the future. Some implants are removed in stages to help increase the healing at the fracture site whereas for some cases all of the implants can be removed at once. Implant removals are easier than the original surgery and may be done as an out-patient procedure. The bone plate may be removed once healing is confirmed. Recovery following this procedure is minimal (4 weeks to allow the incision to heal and the screw holes to fill in).