



Wheat Ridge Veterinary Specialists

• EXPERTISE YOU CAN TRUST •

The exercises listed below are intended to help your pet develop strength, weight bearing, and balance in their operated limb(s) during the postoperative period. Because our canine companions are talented athletes and very adaptive, they usually have no problem walking on three legs; therefore, we often have to “re-educate” them on how to use their injured or operated leg.

Strengthening Exercises

- **“Cookies”** to the opposite (contralateral) hip. Hold a treat or special snack (cookie) to the opposite hip area, this will encourage the patient to turn their head and neck to that side and thus shift weight to the operated side.
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **“Weight Shifts”** front to rear. Gently lift the opposite forelimb off the ground therefore shifting weight to the opposite rear limb and facilitating increased weight bearing.
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **Backward** walking for increased joint sense, hip/stifle extension and strengthening.
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **“Step-overs”** to increase flexion/extension pattern.
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- Practice **“Sit to Stands”** with foot tucked under buttocks in a “normal” manner (takes the place of passive range of motion).
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **“Incline Stands”** Place front paws on small uphill incline or step, about 30 degree incline. Hold for 5-10 counts, then take feet off step. This exercise shifts weight to the rear limbs.
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **“Side Shifts”** Gently push patient from side to side at the hips, then push patient opposite shoulder to opposite hip
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **“Counter-irritants”** Place a small marble, pebble, bottle cap, or syringe cap between the pads of a foot in a non-operated leg and tape this object in place (sometimes just a piece of tape around the foot works well). Then take your pet for a directed 5-10 minute walk on a leash. The counter-irritant between the pads on a good foot will promote weight shifting to the operated leg. Remove the irritant immediately after the walk.
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **Front Leg Wheel Barrow**
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____
- **Rear Leg Wheel Barrow—“Dancing”**
Repetitions: _____ Sessions: _____

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