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## **REHABILITATION REGIME**

Once radiographs have confirmed adequate bone healing, you and your pet may begin rehabilitation. During this period the patient's activities are gradually increased in order to stretch the surgery scar tissue and rebuild muscles. The degree of activity should progress with the patient remaining comfortable. Since increasing duration, not intensity is the goal, explosive activities, such as running, jumping, or playing, are NOT allowed during the rehabilitation period.

Throughout the rehabilitation process your pet is allowed to go as far as he/she is able while remaining comfortable. To judge your dog's comfort, watch him/her while getting up following exercise and rest. If invigorated and excited about more activity, your dog is comfortable. If he/she gets up with stiffness and complaint, then the amount of activity should be reduced.

### WEEKS 1-3

The first 3 weeks of activity are comprised of progressively longer walks with your pet on a short leash. Begin with short walks of one block, or equivalent, and see how your dog responds. Continue at this distance for a few days. If the dog remains comfortable, double the distance of the walk. Continue doubling the distance of the walks every few days as the dog's comfort level permits. If the animal appears to be uncomfortable with the increased distance, cut the length of the walk back 50%. Your pet will benefit more from several short walks in one day rather than a single long walk.

### WEEKS 4-6

During this time period, continue the walks on a long lead. This allows your dog the freedom to trot back and forth, increasing the usage of the leg. As distances are more difficult to judge at this point, it is important to monitor your dog's comfort level closely during this stage of rehabilitation. Supervised swimming is OK to begin at this time.

### WEEKS 7-9

At this time your dog is allowed very mild activity off lead. The area should have no other animals or distractions around. Your dog should remain under your voice control. NO jumping, chasing a ball, or playing with other pets is permitted. Avoid any other activities where your dog's full concentration is thrown into the activity without any regard for his/her body. Swimming is excellent therapy.

A final checkup at the end of the rehabilitation process is needed before full activity may be resumed, generally 4 months post-op.