

Post Elbow surgery discharge information for Zen

Zen has just recovered from elbow surgery and the following advice will help ensure that the post operative phase is as comfortable and pain free as possible.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Zen will probably be quiet for the first week, have difficulty moving around and may not eat or drink as much as usual. Then Zen should gradually brighten up and attempt to use the operated leg within the first 1-2 weeks. Thereafter there should be gradual progress in weight bearing and walking ability.

DO

- Keep Zen **STRICTLY** confined for the next 6 weeks. A suitably large cage is ideal. A small room can be used if Zen is too large for a cage. Lead control must be enforced at all other times especially when out for toileting.
- Reduce Zen's food by 20-50% to stop any gain in weight.
- Return to your veterinary surgeon in two weeks for a wound check and for removal of any skin staples or sutures that may be present. Some wounds are closed with sutures under the skin and only need to be checked.
- Give the medication as directed on the labels. This medication is of two types.
 - A course of antibiotics as a precaution against post-operative infection.
 - A course of anti-inflammatory drugs to control pain and reduce inflammation. As there is usually arthritis of the elbow joint Zen may require long term anti inflammatory medication, joint supplementation such as glucosamine, Cartrophen injections and an arthritis control diet such as Hills j/d diet. Please arrange this with your own veterinary surgeon.
- Please update us on Zen's progress 6-8 weeks after surgery.
- Introduce exercise gradually after 6 weeks, working up from 15 minutes lead walk twice daily by doubling the frequency after 2 weeks, then doubling the duration after a further 2 weeks, and then introduce free exercise for 15 minute periods, gradually increasing the duration every 1-2 weeks.
- Do telephone us during our open hours if you are at all worried about Zen's progress.

DO NOT

- Allow Zen to lick or interfere with the surgical wound at all. This is important to prevent any post operative infection.
- Allow free exercise in the house for 6 weeks.

In case of any problems "out of hours", please contact your own veterinary surgeon's emergency service unless instructed otherwise.