



MAINLIACHT SURGICAL DISCHARGE

Post-operative guidance



Robert Murray

B. Sc (Hons) Biomed, DVM (Hons), MRCVS

Complex Small Animal Surgery
Orthopaedic and Soft Tissue

- Complex Surgery
- Cruciate Disease
- Patellar Luxation
- Fracture Repair
- BOAS / TECA-LBO

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Stapled Enterectomy Surgery Discharge Sheet

Procedure Summary

Your dog has undergone a stapled enterectomy, a surgical procedure in which a diseased or damaged section of intestine has been removed and the two healthy ends reconnected using a gastrointestinal stapling device. This technique allows for a secure and consistent closure while reducing surgical time compared to hand-sewn methods.

The intestinal tissues are extremely delicate during the early healing period. Strict rest, careful feeding, and close monitoring are essential to reduce the risk of complications such as leakage at the surgical site, infection, or peritonitis. Mild lethargy and reduced appetite may be seen in the first 24 to 48 hours following surgery.

Complications

Common and expected complications include mild lethargy, reduced appetite in the first 24 to 48 hours, and mild discomfort at the surgical site.

Occasional complications include vomiting, diarrhoea, delayed return to normal appetite, and wound irritation.

Less common complications include surgical site infection, ileus, or delayed intestinal healing.

Rare but serious complications include breakdown of the intestinal closure leading to leakage, septic peritonitis, severe infection, or systemic illness. These complications can be life-threatening and require urgent veterinary attention.



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Medications

Medication	How to Give	Duration	Purpose
Antibiotic	Twice daily with food	As prescribed	Infection prevention
Gabapentin	Twice daily with food	As prescribed	Pain relief and adjunctive analgesia

All medications should be given exactly as prescribed and the full course completed. Medications should be given with food where advised. Do not administer non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs unless specifically instructed, as these may increase the risk of gastrointestinal complications. Do not give any human medications. If vomiting occurs after medication administration, discontinue and contact the practice for advice.

Feeding and Gastrointestinal Care

Careful reintroduction of food is essential following intestinal surgery. Small amounts of water should be offered initially, little and often. A bland, easily digestible diet should then be introduced in small, frequent meals over the following days. Gradual return to the normal diet should occur only as advised.

Rich foods, treats, bones, rawhide, scavenging, and sudden dietary changes must be avoided during the recovery period. Mild reduction in appetite during the first 24 to 48 hours can be normal. Persistent inappetence should be reported.

Activity and Wound Care

Strict rest is required during the healing period. Lead walks should be limited to toileting only. Running, jumping, stairs, and play must be prevented.



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An Elizabethan collar or protective garment must be worn at all times for ten to fourteen days to prevent interference with the wound.

The abdominal incision is closed with dissolvable sutures beneath the skin. The site should be checked daily for swelling, redness, discharge, or opening. The area must be kept clean and dry. Bathing and swimming should be avoided until healing is complete.

Monitoring at Home

Close monitoring during the post-operative period is essential. Your dog should remain comfortable, begin eating gradually, and pass normal faeces as recovery progresses.

Any signs of vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal discomfort, or behavioural changes should be taken seriously. Early identification of complications significantly improves outcomes.

When to Contact the Practice Immediately

Contact the practice without delay if your dog shows signs of persistent vomiting or diarrhoea, refusal to eat beyond 48 hours, abdominal pain or a hunched posture, a distended or firm abdomen, lethargy, collapse, fever, or any discharge or opening of the surgical wound.

Follow-Up and Prognosis

A post-operative check is typically advised at approximately three days to assess comfort and early healing, followed by a further examination at ten to fourteen days.

With appropriate rest, feeding, and medication, most dogs recover well within two to four weeks. The prognosis is generally good provided no major complications occur during the early healing phase.



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If you have any concerns at any stage, please contact your veterinary practice.

Kind regards

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