

Frequently Asked Questions

Ruptured Cranial Cruciate Ligament (CCL/ACL) and TPLO/TTA Surgery

1. Is surgery really necessary for my dog's torn cruciate ligament?

A relatively small percentage of dogs will regain good function and comfort of the leg with no surgery. Unfortunately most will not and arthritis, pain and a secondary torn meniscus will result. Surgery always provides the best chance for a return to an optimal quality of life.

2. I was told my dog probably has a partially torn CCL. Should I wait and see if it gets better?

No. A partially torn CCL is just as bad as a fully torn CCL. Arthritis, pain and a secondary torn meniscus are the likely outcome. Under most circumstances, surgery is still recommended.

3. What percent of dogs do well after surgery?

90 to 95% of dogs return to a good or excellent level of comfort and function. 5 to 10% may have disappointing results – stiffness, arthritis, decreased use of the leg etc. Following the post-op instructions carefully as well as being diligent with rehab will give your dog the best chance for a full recovery.

4. What is the best surgical procedure for my dog?

Numerous surgical options are available for your pet. Small dogs often do well with an “extra-capsular” technique, also known as an “imbrication” (tightening) procedure. For large dogs, TPLO and TTA are superior and considered the “gold standard”.

5. Are there risks of complications?

Yes. Like any surgical procedure, there are potential complications. Most complications are minor – swelling, infection, stiffness etc. Catastrophic complications are rare but possible. These include implant failure, bone fractures, resistant infections, bone cancer etc. Again, these are rare.

6. What about the meniscus?

A small percentage of dogs with a normal meniscus at the time of CCL repair will tear a meniscus after surgery, requiring a second surgical procedure.

7. Can my dog re-tear the cruciate ligament after surgery?

No. Since we are not replacing the CCL, it cannot be torn. Likewise, once complete healing is obtained (about 6 months), the implants are not at much risk of breaking or moving. A dog can, however, sprain the soft tissues in the knee causing lameness.

8. Is my dog at risk of rupturing his cruciate ligament in his normal leg?

Yes. About 40% of dogs will eventually tear the opposite cruciate ligament.

9. Do I really need to restrict my dog's activity after surgery?

Yes. It is extremely important to rest your dog, use a leash at all times when outside and eliminate rough-housing, jumping and stairs.

10. Will there be things I need to do to help my dog get better?

Yes. For the best outcome, you will need to be diligent about controlling your dog's rambunctious behavior. In addition, icing the leg, basic rehab exercises and walking will be important. Dogs will get stronger faster and do better in the long-run by following a rehabilitation program. Given the investment made and the benefits of a full recovery, we strongly recommend it.

**Dupont
Veterinary
Clinic**
At Coldwater

Connect with us!



We are always happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Please feel free to contact us at (260) 637-7676.