

PHYSIOTHERAPY Following Spinal Surgery or For Managing Back Pain in Dogs



Spinal injury and pain is very common in the dog. Spinal injury may be degenerative in nature or may occur secondary to trauma affecting the nerves and spinal column. Surgery may or may not be indicated depending upon injury severity, age or risk of complications.

Physiotherapy is a vital component in the management of spinal injury when treated conservatively or post operatively. Pain, swelling and inflammation can result in the inhibition of the stability muscles that support the joints of the spine and muscle wasting of these important muscles can occur quickly with disuse following spinal injury. Physiotherapy aims to restore normal muscle balance/ core stability around the spine in order to prevent injury recurrence.

Following surgery it is important to allow the injury to heal and for your dog to have strict rest for 4-6 weeks. Gentle physiotherapy is advised during this time. Full healing can take more than 12 months and in some cases may result in a degree of paralysis or ataxia. It is important to begin physiotherapy as soon as possible after surgery or injury.

About Animal Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy is a well established profession in the human health care field that is now becoming recognised as a valuable adjunct to veterinary management of animals to ensure optimal treatment and recovery. Physiotherapy on animals works on the same principles as human physiotherapy and aims to promote healing and accelerate recovery, restore function and movement, reduce pain and inflammation, improve strength, optimise function, improve quality of life and prevent future injury and secondary complications from compensatory gait. Animal physio's are also qualified human physio's with Masters training in Animal or Veterinary Physiotherapy.

Animal physio's will use a variety of techniques which may include joint/ spinal mobilisation, soft tissue massage, gait correction/ movement re-education, stretching, neuromuscular stimulation, electrotherapy and balance/ stability/ proprioceptive exercises. Owners will also be provided with a home exercise program to continue rehabilitation and lots of advice and education on your dog's condition and best management at home.

Where? When?

Sandy works at the **Brisbane Veterinary Specialist Centre** every **Tuesday**. An initial consultation/ treatment and home program prescription will take 1 hour and follow up consultations will take approximately **30-45** minutes. Appointments can be made directly with Sandy by calling **0415 219 566**.

If you are not sure if Physiotherapy is appropriate or have any further questions about your dog's rehabilitation, please do not hesitate to call and discuss with Sandy or alternatively speak with your vet or surgeon.

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