

Postoperative Bandage Care

The purpose of the bandage is to protect the soft tissues (skin, muscles, etc.) during the early postoperative period. The time the bandage will be in place is dependent on the patient's medical problem and the specific purpose of the bandage. Carefully follow these bandage care instructions.

During the early postoperative period while the bandage is present, the patient's activity should be *limited*. Supervise your pet very closely whenever it goes outdoors. You may be instructed to use a sling during this time to stabilize your pet should it begin to slip or fall. Do not allow the bandage to become wet or soiled since a moist dermatitis (rash) may result. If the ground is wet, cover the bandage (temporarily) with a plastic bag to protect it from any moisture. The plastic bag *must be removed* after the walk to prevent dermatitis from developing due to the lack of air circulation.

Check the bandage at *least twice daily* for signs of irritation, swelling, odor, or any evidence of discharge soaking through the bandage. These may indicate pressure sores or moist dermatitis have developed. If the bandage is placed too tightly, you may find the toes becoming swollen, excessively hot or excessively cold. A sudden decrease in the use of the bandaged limb or licking and chewing at the bandage may also be indicators of a problem. Finally, you should monitor your pet's appetite and attitude closely. Sudden changes in either of these may signal a problem with the bandage. *Contact your veterinarian as soon as possible on the day you notice any of these issues developing.*



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