

## Wound and Bandage Care

Appropriate wound and/or bandage care at home is very important for healing. Wounds or incisions that become wet, soiled, traumatized, or infected may be unable to heal. Similarly, bandages that become wet or soiled can lead to excessive constriction or infection of the underlying tissue.

### **Incision/Wound Care:**

It is important to keep the wound or incision clean and dry. Unless specifically directed to do so, do not apply any topical medications or ointments. Monitor the wound or incision carefully for any signs of increased redness, pain, swelling, or gray or black tissue, as these could be signs of necrosis (dead tissue) or infection.

You can apply a dry, warm compress (NOT HOT!) to the wound or incision three times a day for 5-10 minutes as your pet permits. You can make a dry, warm compress by heating up a damp washcloth in the microwave until it's warm (NOT HOT). Place the washcloth in a plastic bag and hold it against your pet's wound or incision.

You should keep your pet's activity level restricted while the wound or incision heals. This means no running, jumping, or rough-housing. Your pet should wear an e-collar (or a shirt depending on the wound's location) at all times to avoid any licking, chewing, biting, or scratching of the incision.

### **Bandage Care:**

Your pet's bandage must be kept clean and dry; your pet should wear an e-collar at all times to prevent licking or chewing the bandage. If the bandage becomes wet or soiled or if you have any concern that it is irritating the skin or causing swelling, it should be rechecked immediately.

Your pet's bandage will need to be removed or replaced according to the schedule advised. Bandages that are left on for longer than intended can cause severe tissue injury or infection. You should not attempt to replace a bandage if it falls off, as bandages that are placed too tightly can cause significant damage to the underlying tissue. Contact a veterinarian if you have any concerns about your pet's bandage.

You should keep your pet's activity level restricted while he/she has a bandage. This means no running, jumping, or rough-housing.