

## External skeletal fixator postoperative sheet

Please also refer to our 'General Orthopaedic Postoperative Sheet' found in 'Owner resources' on our website.

Your pet has had an external skeletal fixator applied. This means that pins are passing through the skin into the bones to help them heal. Although it may look dramatic, external fixators are usually well tolerated.

In the vast majority of cases, complications of external fixators are manageable but it is essential to respect the postoperative instructions.

Most common complications include: infection, pin loosening, soft tissue trauma.

Your pet should be able to walk on the operated leg from day 3-7 postoperative. If this does not happen, please contact your vets.

Regular vet checks should be considered to assess the frame and the progress of your pet. These checks can be scheduled every 10-14 days.

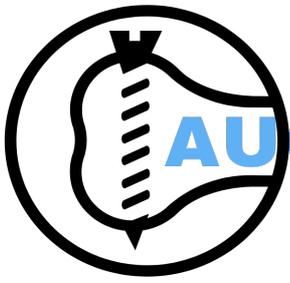
The frame should be covered with bandage for protection.

Some minor discharge from around the pins is acceptable. The skin around the pins should be kept clean and dry. If it is clean and dry, please do not disturb it.

If minor discharge is noticeable, please clean the skin, twice a day, with a cotton bud dipped in hibiscrub (available from your vet or from pharmacy).

Follow up X-rays should be performed 6-8 weeks postoperative. These are essential to assess healing of the bone.





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Once the bone has healed, we will consider removing the frame, a procedure performed under sedation. Please note that every patient heals differently and follow up X-rays may need to be repeated several times until proof of bone healing is obtained.

Some bleeding from the former pin sites is to be expected and acceptable. This bleeding should stop after 6-12 hours.

Please seek veterinary attention should any of the following occur

- increased pin discharge
- smelly, cloudy or 'ugly' discharge
- increased lameness
- any clamp, bars, glue that touches the skin
- swelling of the leg after 5 days postoperative
- deviation of the leg alignment i.e. leg is 'wonky'

