



Mobile Veterinary Surgery

bandage care

Many surgery patients go home with bandages, because they provide comfort and protection. Bandage functions include acting as a barrier against infection, speeding wound healing, and giving support to injured limbs.

Although bandages are never placed with the intent to harm, injuries can result from improper placement or care. **It is critically important that bandages be monitored and concerns addressed promptly.** Please follow these recommendations, so that we can prevent problems related to your pet's bandage:

- *The bandage must remain clean and dry.* Please cover the bandage with a plastic bag when your pet goes outside. The bag should be removed each time your pet comes inside, to prevent moisture accumulation around the foot. Please avoid using tight elastic or hair bands to keep the bag in place.
- If the bandage gets wet, please call for advice.
- If the bandage develops an odor, please schedule an appointment for recheck examination and bandage change promptly (within one day).
- "Strikethrough" occurs when fluid soaks from an incision or wound to the surface of a bandage. If you think that an area of discoloration on the bandage may be the result of strikethrough, the bandage should be evaluated or changed promptly (within one day).
- The bandage is intended to stay in place, and skin irritation can develop as a result of slipping or slumping. Please call to schedule an appointment for recheck examination and bandage replacement or removal if the bandage moves enough that an incision or wound is visible or wrinkles accumulate in the bandage material. It is normal for bandages to loosen slightly, especially at the top.
- In general, pets who are wearing bandages should also be resting. Running, jumping, climbing furniture, and playing roughly should be prevented. Time outside should be limited to leash-controlled walks.
- *Please do not modify the bandage yourself.* Bandage placement requires skill and practice, as well as appropriate materials, and amateur bandaging may result in setbacks or even serious injury. The following materials are NEVER appropriate for bandaging dogs or cats: duct tape, electrical tape, Ace bandage wrap, and caustic liniments or poultices.
- *If your pet's bandage comes off, please call your family veterinarian or Dr. Arthur.* If this occurs after office hours, please confine your pet to a crate or small room with an Elizabethan collar in place, email drarthur@mobilevetsurgery.net, and call your family veterinarian the next morning. If the bandage includes a splint, be sure to *bring the splint with you*. Otherwise, it may be necessary to make a new splint.
- If your pet tolerates the bandage when it is initially placed and subsequently seems uncomfortable or bothered by the bandage, the bandage may need to be changed sooner than planned. Please call for advice.
- *Chewing the bandage or ingesting bandage material is detrimental* and must be prevented. Elizabethan collars and inflatable ProTec collars should be used as necessary.
- *Please follow the recommended timeframe for recheck examinations* and bandage change appointments. Bandages should be replaced at least every two weeks, and appointments are typically scheduled weekly so that any problems, such as skin irritation or joint immobility, can be identified as soon they begin to occur. Wound care often initially requires daily bandage change, and bandages can gradually be left in place longer as healing progresses.

Thank you for investing the extra attention and care that bandages require. We appreciate seeing bandages that are clean and dry, because it helps keep them safe and beneficial.

Please be sure to call or email with any questions or concerns as they arise.

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