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"Chloe" - GSD with Ruptured Cruciate Ligament



Chloe

Cruciate ligament injuries are by far the most common serious orthopaedic injury in dogs! The anterior cruciate ligament is responsible for providing stability to the stifle (knee) joint. In humans this common injury is directly linked with playing sport. Given the level of athleticism that many of our pets display when exercised it is not difficult to see the similarity although many breeds of dog appear to be predisposed and can develop cruciate problems with the minimal amount of effort!

"Chloe", a German Shepherd dog, is kept in excellent body condition through regular exercise both in this area and often when her owners take the trip to Wales. It was after one of her regular sojourns that her owners noticed her go lame on her right hind leg.

A cruciate injury was suspected and she was treated conservatively with restricted exercise and medication. All appeared to be going well when, after a particularly energetic burst, her limp deteriorated badly. It soon became clear that her cruciate ligament had finally ruptured completely.

Unfortunately for "Chloe" the increased movement of her thigh bone (femur) meant that she went on to develop an additional injury to her meniscus. This is a cartilage "pad" on which the femur normally rests. Instability allows the bone to "derail" and tear the "pad" on which it normally rocks back and forth. It is vital that the area of meniscal damage is removed at the time of surgery to restabilise the joint.

Surgery of this kind is not straight forward and so is expensive, usually in the region of £1000. This is probably the most common problem referred to me by other veterinary surgeons.

Fortunately, as "Chloe" can testify, if everything goes well the future remains bright for further energetic forays to Wales!

Terry Dunne BVMS, Cert SAO, MRCVS

This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at www.fairfield-vets.co.uk

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