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Nicholas Woo
BVSc
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Ophthalmology
Anna Deykin
BVSc, FACVSc

Oncology
Rod Straw
BVSc, DACVS
Valerie Poirier
DVM, DACVIM,
DACVR

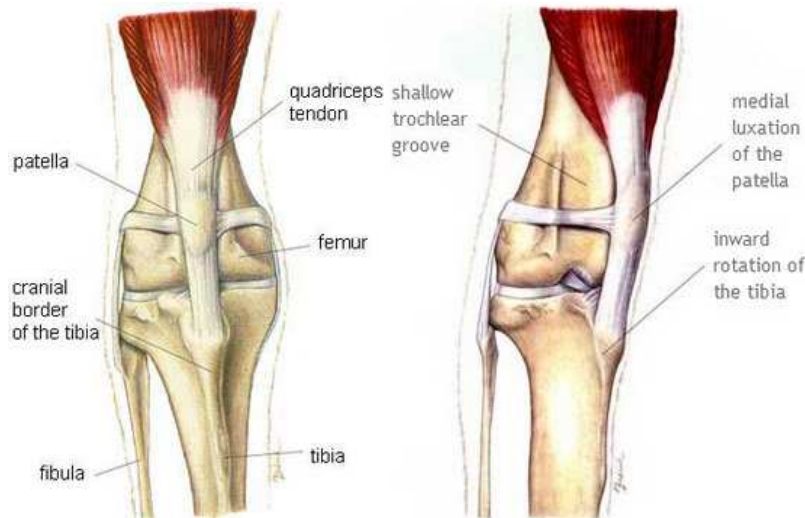
Internal Medicine
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Stephanie Mouatt
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(resident SA med)

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Medial Patellar Luxation

Bruce Smith BVSc, MS, FACVSc, Dip ACVS
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What is Medial Patellar Luxation?

The patella is the knee cap. The patella is located in a bony groove (called the trochlear groove) which lies in the lower end of the femur (thigh bone). For comfortable function of the hind limb, the patella must slide effortlessly along the groove during flexion and extension of the knee. Medial Patellar Luxation is the condition where the patella displaces (or luxates) from the groove, temporarily or permanently, and sits towards the inside of the leg. This can be both painful and debilitating. If left uncorrected a period of time, ligament injury and arthritis may occur.

Medial Patellar Luxation is graded I to IV where IV is the most severe. Grades are determined by the amount of time the patella spends out of the trochlear groove. In Grade I luxations, the patella is luxated only occasionally, while in Grade IV luxations the patella is permanently out of position. The more severe the grade of luxation, the more extensive and complex and the surgical treatment becomes.

Medial Patellar Luxation is a common condition in small dogs (less than 10 kg). It is prevalent in those breeds with "bowed" hind limbs. It may occur in one or both legs. In larger dogs the condition is may be associated with knee trauma. The condition does occur in cats, but only rarely.

How is Medial Patellar Luxation Treated?

Surgery is required to correct and stabilize the knee cap. As part of the surgical planning each knee is evaluated by the surgeon while the patient is fully anesthetized. X-rays are taken at the same time to assess for the presence, type and severity of bone deformity. From this assessment an individual surgical plan is made. Surgical correction may include the remodelling of the bony groove, repositioning of the ligament of the patella or complete realignment of the stifle.

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What is the cost of Medial Patellar Luxation Surgery?

The operation requires the participation of an experienced surgical team using a sterile operating room and specialized equipment. Commonly steel pins are required to maintain bone repositioning. A cost estimate will be provided by the surgeon prior to treatment. Currently (2010), the cost will range from \$2,000 to \$3,000 depending on whether one or both knees require surgery, and the complexity of the problem.

X-rays to confirm bone healing and procedures to remove metal pins, etc after healing, if required, are an additional cost, typically \$300 to \$700.

How long will my Pet be in hospital?

All dogs must remain in hospital until they are comfortable and able to walk. This can take from two to five days and depends on the size of your dog and whether the surgery has been performed on one or both knees. During surgery, and for the first few days post-operatively, we provide your pet with intensive pain control utilising epidurals, pain-patches, injections and oral medication as indicated. All dogs go home with oral pain medication for about ten days.

What after-care will my Pet need?

Home care requires strict confinement with controlled activity until healing is confirmed by X-Ray. This is usually at about eight weeks. Rechecks are determined on an individual basis; typically they occur at two weeks postoperatively for suture removal, and at eight weeks for X-Rays.

Activity restriction for the first eight weeks is essential while bone healing occurs. Early controlled activity i.e. short leash walks, and physiotherapy are beneficial.

Physiotherapy is beneficial for post-op rehabilitation and we recommend that you arrange a consultation with our animal physiotherapist. To learn more about Physiotherapy you can visit our physiotherapist's website www.holisticanimalphysiotherapy.com.au

Will my Pet return to Normal Activity?

Normal comfort and activity is almost always achieved, however it can take up to six months for a complete return to vigorous activities like ball chasing.

Are there any Complications with Surgical Treatment of Medial Patellar Luxation?

Medial Patellar Luxation is a technically demanding surgery. While complications during diagnosis or surgery are uncommon, they may occur and may alter the chances of a good outcome or the requirement for additional procedures. Higher grade luxations tend to have a higher incidence of complications than lower grade luxations.

Financing surgical treatment for your pet

BVSC understands that surgical treatments are both unexpected and costly. To assist you, access to third party external finance companies are available. These companies require a detailed application & credit check. BVSC is not an agent for these companies and may request a deposit to allow treatment to proceed if finance approval is pending.

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Where is BVSC and how do I make an appointment for my pet?

BVSC is located on Brisbane's north side on the corner of Old Northern & Keong Roads, Albany Creek 4035.

To make an appointment for your pet you will be required to have a referral from your vet, to get a referral contact your veterinarian and request referral to BVSC then contact our friendly reception staff on (07) 3264 9400

