



Pre-Operative Information: Pan Tarsal Arthrodesis (Fusion of the ankle joint)

Price: £3,700 (including VAT @ 20%)



Arthrodesis is defined as the irreversible fusion of two or more bones of a joint. This creates an osseous bridge, preventing joint motion, and allows the arthrodesed joint to transmit weight-bearing forces. There are several small tarsal joints that together make up the hock or ankle joint. Fusion of the tarsal joints is often indicated when there is irrevocable traumatic damage to the hock often involving ligament damage.

Hyperextension of the tarsus commonly results when a dog lands heavily on their hind leg(s) from a great height, overstretching and damaging the ligaments that hold the small bones together. Some breeds like Shetland Sheep Dogs are especially prone to spontaneous collapse of the tarsal (or carpal) joints under normal loading due to a degenerative process involving the ligaments. Tarsal arthrodesis is also indicated when the tarsal bones are fractured, or when end-stage degenerative joint disease (arthritis) can no longer be managed medically.

It is important to understand that an arthrodesis is a salvage procedure. This means that the procedure is irreversible once performed. As a result, an arthrodesis is generally performed when conservative management has failed or unlikely to be successful.

Arthrodesis Indications

- Joint instability – Hyperextension injury of the tarsus is the most common indication for performing a pan tarsal arthrodesis (surgical fusion of all of the tarsal joints). The high tensile forces following normal weight bearing make conservative treatment futile.
- Intractable arthritis or joint pain.
- Persistent luxation or instability of the joint
- Non-reconstructable articular fractures of the tarsal bones
- Neurological injury

Pan Tarsal Arthrodesis Surgery

The tarsal joints are opened, and the articular cartilage is removed. Cancellous bone grafts taken from another part of the body (usually the humerus or tibia) are inserted into the joint spaces. Specialised surgical plates are affixed with surgical screws to the tibia, tarsus, and metatarsus as required to rigidly fix or hold the joint in a static position.

A splint bandage may be used to support the leg and joint post-operatively.

All patients will receive pain medications to reduce their post-operative discomfort. Your pet should be kept calm and quiet after surgery to allow for tissue healing. A collar is necessary to prevent the patient interfering with the surgical site. Following the post-operative instructions carefully is essential in order to ensure that the procedure is as successful as possible.

For more information or to discuss this surgery in more detail with one of our veterinary surgeons please contact us on 015394 88555 or visit the referrals section of our website at www.oakhillvetgroup.co.uk

What is included?

At Oakhill Vets we strive to ensure our surgeries are 'all inclusive' and so this surgery INCLUDES the following:

- Pre-anaesthetic blood screen (as required)
- Hospitalisation (up to 24 hours)
- Intravenous fluids during the anaesthetic and surgery
- General Anaesthesia
- Surgery
- Post-operative medication (for up to two weeks)
- 24-hour post-operative laser / cold-pack treatment / physiotherapy as required, under the guidance of our Animal Rehabilitation Centre (ARC) staff

What is not included?

- Post-operative dressing changes for up to 6 weeks
- Post-operative x-rays are advised around 6-8 weeks post-operatively. These are **not** included in the price of the surgery.

Post-operative complications are common. While we endeavour to give you an up-front, all-inclusive estimate, when it comes to pets recovering from surgery there is unfortunately an element of unpredictability! Complications, which may incur additional costs include (but are not limited to):

- Self-trauma by pet to surgical site
- Post-operative wound infection

This procedure has a risk of post-operative complications. The necessity of a splinted dressing for several weeks following the surgery leads to a risk of developing pressure sores and rubs. These can often be managed conservatively. Additionally, the forces the implants are required to take and the multiple bones they bridge can lead to loosening of the screws and potentially failure of the implants which may necessitate their removal. Providing arthrodesis has been achieved implant removal is possible without compromising the repair in most cases.

Payment Options

Payment is expected in full at the time of consultation or upon discharge from Oakhill Vets. If your pet is insured, we would request that you pay for your their treatment and claim the funds back from your insurance company. Once you have settled the cost of any treatment we can help you complete your insurance claim form(s) at no additional charge. Direct claims may be arranged with some insurance companies and are subject to a check with our referral coordinators prior to your appointment. An administration fee is chargeable each time a direct claim is carried out by our referral coordinators. If you have any concerns about payment, then please contact us prior to your consultation.

Why choose Oakhill Veterinary Referrals?

Oakhill Vets is based in Windermere in the beautiful Lake District. We are happy to take referrals from clients further afield. Let our friendly, highly skilled and experienced team of Veterinary Surgeons and Registered Veterinary Nurses look after your pet while you relax and enjoy a short break in The Lakes. For more details, please phone the practice and speak to one of our helpful referral coordinators on 015394 88555.