



Tips and Tricks for Your Pet's New Device

Rehabilitation is a very important part of teaching your pet how to walk in an orthotic or prosthetic. Twice weekly rehab sessions are recommended to help your pet learn how to maneuver in their orthotic or prosthetic. Below are some suggestions to start working on at home.

1. We encourage parents to use verbal rewards, treats, or a favorite toy when using the device. We want your pet to associate the device with fun times.
2. Slow and short leash walks are recommended. It is important to have your pet heel on short leash. The slower the walk, the more evenly weight will be distributed on each limb. First start on sidewalks and then transition to walking on different surfaces.
3. Short frequent walks are more useful than long walks.
4. Performing hind limb weight shifting encourages weight bearing on the affected limb.
5. Help your pet practice transitioning in the device. Encourage transitions such as down to sit, sit to stand, stand to sit, sit to down.
6. Your pet should never be left alone in the device for the first few weeks to ensure safety. They should also never be left in a crate in a kennel with the device while adapting unless instructed otherwise.
7. Have your pet practice going up and down curbs in the device. This will help them determine where the bottom of the device is and learn how to bend in the device.
8. In stance, lightly tap the limb with the device to the ground. You can also tap just medial, lateral, cranial and caudal to the properly aligned position on the ground. This helps to orient the residual limb in the device, which increases proprioception and limb awareness.
9. If your pet is hesitant to advance the limb with a device, you can manually advance the limb with your hand. Or you may attach a theraband to the device to assist with advancing.
10. Use the term "place" or "step" when training your pet to take a step forward.
11. Have your pet practice walking back and forth parallel on a hill. This will encourage increase weight bearing and bending.
12. If your pet doesn't place the limb down. Apply gentle pressure over the hip or scapula while walking to encourage weight bearing.
13. When your pet is lying down practice massaging and rubbing the limb in and out of the device. This will improve proprioception, awareness, and tolerance for placing the device on.