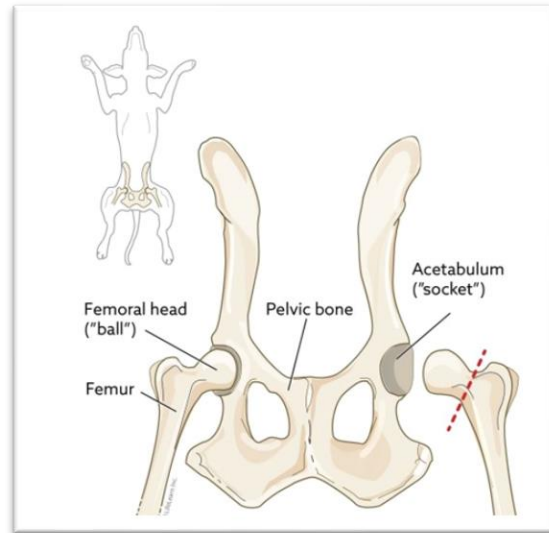


# Femoral Head and Neck Ostectomy (FHNO)

## The Procedure

Femoral Head and Neck Ostectomy is a salvage procedure that is performed to treat a diseased or damaged hip joint, to allow for pain free mobility.

The hip joint can be thought of as a “ball and socket joint” (see diagram). When this procedure is performed, the femoral head (ball) and neck of the femur are removed entirely. Post operatively, a fibrous connection between the cut bone and the socket forms – this is known as a pseudoarthrosis or “fake joint”.



## Post operatively:

### Surgical Site

This will need to be protected from interference from your pet to minimise complications. This means that a buster collar will need to be worn for the duration of time that the skin needs to heal (10 days). It can be removed for your pet to eat or drink if they struggle with it on, but it must be replaced at all other times.

We recommend cold and warm compress from a pain relieving and healing perspective:

- 3 days cold compress – a cold pack wrapped in a thin towel to protect the skin, to be applied over the surgical site for 10 minutes three times a day, for 3 days.
- 3 days warm compress – a warm pack wrapped in a thin towel to protect the skin, to be applied over the surgical site for 10 minutes three times a day, for 3 days

### Medication

This will be detailed on a separate post operative discharge sheet but will involve:

- 5 day course of antibiotics.
- Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatories (NSAID) for 2-4 weeks.
- Paracetamol for approximately 5 days.
- Gabapentin may also be dispensed.

The NSAID can be extended to help with use of the limb during early rehabilitation (see below).

## Post operative checks

3 days post operatively to check the surgical site and 10 days post operatively to check the surgical site, and remove skin sutures if present.

## Exercise

Rest is advised for the first 7 days after this procedure, to allow for initial inflammation and healing to occur. For dogs and cats, we would recommend restriction to 1 room. After a week, dogs may start 10 minute slow lead walks three times a day.

Once the 10 day post op period is reached, focussed rehabilitation is really important. For a functional pseudoarthrosis to form, the hind limb that has had the surgery needs to be encouraged to move normally, so controlled exercise can be re-instigated quickly.+

This is a common procedure that we perform in small dogs and cats, their exercise regime will vary due to species but it is all about early return to use and encouraging full range of motion:

## Dogs

Smaller, lighter dog breeds cope well moving around quickly on three legs. It is important that your dog is encouraged to use the limb which means slow lead walking initially for dogs (when they move slowly, they are less likely to use three legs) as well as underwater treadmill activity if possible. Lead walking will need to be done in a controlled manner increasing in 5-minute increments:

- 10 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days
- 15 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days
- 20 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days
- 25 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days
- 30 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days
- 35 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days
- 40 minutes three times a day on the lead for 5 days

At this point it is fine to start to allow some off the lead exercise. This will also need to be in a controlled manner and we would recommend that it is done mid-way through the lead exercise to allow for appropriate warm up/warm down. Again, do this by increasing in 5-minute increments so:

- 15 minutes lead, 5 minutes off the lead, 20 minutes lead for 5 days
- 15 minutes lead, 10 minutes off the lead 15 minutes lead for 5 days
- 15 minutes lead, 15 minutes off the lead, 15 minutes lead for 5 days
- 10 minutes lead, 20 minutes off the lead, 10 minutes lead for 5 days

Physiotherapy exercises including sit to stand and step over poles are excellent ways of encouraging use of the limb.

Placing treats against a worktop side so your dog has to stretch up on their hind limbs to reach the treat is a good way of getting them to stand up on their hind limbs and fully extend their hip joint.

## Cats

After the initial week of room rest, rehabilitation can begin. We would recommend keeping your cat indoors for 4-6 weeks after this surgery, to allow for the soft tissues to fully heal prior to normal activity.

It is still important for them to rehabilitate well, so full use of the house after a week resting is fine (just make sure to shut the windows and lock the cat flaps).

Playing games will help, especially games where the direction changes and they go off balance slightly and therefore need to support themselves with the affected limb (fishing rod games in particular).

Similarly, as with dogs, placing treats against a worktop side so cat has to stretch up on their hind limbs to reach the treat is a good way of getting them to stand up on their hind limbs and fully extend their hip joint.

You can lift up your cat and gently move them towards the floor and allow them to bear weight in their hind limbs, they will instinctively step their hind limbs backwards. Repeat this a few times to encourage extension of the hind limb (20 repetitions 3 times a day).

We would expect near normal use of the affected limb by approximately 4 weeks post operatively so if your pet is not making good progress in the first few weeks, please do contact your surgery.

## Post operative expectations and potential complications

The aim of the surgery is to provide a pain free hip joint that functions well.

As with all surgical procedures, complications can occur. These may include muscular or neurological damage, patella (knee cap) luxation, and continued lameness. Decreased range of motion and a slight reduction in limb length may be seen, however this doesn't seem to have an effect on the pet's quality of life.

The prognosis after this procedure is good to excellent for return to normal or near-normal function of the limb.