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## Rehabilitation – What to Expect

Physical rehabilitation is an area of veterinary medicine that looks to enhance or restore function, increase mobility, decrease pain, promote healing and return a pet to a normal or improved lifestyle. Rehabilitation can be part of a therapy plan for patients who are recovering from orthopedic surgery, soft tissue injuries, neurological conditions and chronic issues brought about by normal aging. It is also beneficial for patients who are overweight or are not candidates for surgery.

Our rehabilitation department works closely with your primary veterinarian and our team of specialists to expand upon current treatment options depending on a pet's condition. It can help speed up recovery from an injury and build strength and reduce pain for chronic conditions and pets suffering from arthritic pain.

**Initial consultation** - Your initial appointment will start with a review of your pet's history. The doctor will perform a rehabilitation evaluation to obtain baseline measurements of joint range of motion, balance, gait, assess muscle mass, strength and areas of discomfort and tightness. The goals for your pet will be discussed as a personalized rehabilitation plan is developed. This may include both in-clinic rehabilitation treatments and at-home exercises. The rehabilitation plan is unique to each situation and takes into consideration not only the findings from our exam and the patient's needs, but also the needs and abilities of the owner. This appointment will last approximately 60 minutes, dependent on your pet's needs and tolerance. Most patients will receive their initial treatment during this first appointment. Your pet will require recheck appointments to monitor progress.

**Who will perform the treatment** - Veterinarians, veterinary nurses and assistants will provide physical rehabilitation to your pet. They will track your pet's progress during each rehabilitation session, ensuring that the exercises and treatments are appropriate and we are making progress towards the outlined goals for your pet. Treatment time is typically 15-30 minutes.

### Common treatment options may include:

- ❖ Underwater Treadmill - Hydrotherapy
- ❖ Land Treadmill
- ❖ Range of Motion and Strengthening Exercises
- ❖ Class 4 Laser Therapy, Photobiomodulation
- ❖ Transcutaneous Electrical Neuromuscular Stimulation (TENS)
- ❖ Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation (NMES)
- ❖ Therapeutic Ultrasound
- ❖ Thermography
- ❖ Therapeutic Exercises
- ❖ Acoustic Compression Therapy
- ❖ Weight Management
- ❖ Assistive Devices - Prosthetics, Braces, Wheelchair/Cart Fittings and Slings

**Benefits of Rehabilitation:**

- ❖ Decreases pain and inflammation with improved blood flow for optimal healing of the injured area
- ❖ Accelerates healing and expedites recovery after surgery or illness
- ❖ Prevention of secondary injury
- ❖ Improves balance, proprioception, and muscular strength
- ❖ Increases joint flexibility, mobility and strength
- ❖ Restores mobility and function through gait retraining
- ❖ Improves cardiovascular and respiratory endurance
- ❖ Improves muscle memory to reduce muscle atrophy and/or nerve damage
- ❖ Enhances weight loss
- ❖ Preconditioning for surgery
- ❖ Improves the overall health and quality of life for your dog or cat

**Questions or concerns** - For any non-urgent questions, please call or email the team directly at: [rehab@vetspecialty.com](mailto:rehab@vetspecialty.com). If you have any urgent medical concerns outside the Rehabilitation Department's normal business hours, please call our Emergency and Critical Care Department 24 hours a day **(847.459.7535)**.

**Payment options** - Accepted payment options include cash, check, credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express). Financing options are available through CareCredit for qualifying individuals. If you are interested in applying for CareCredit, please let a member of our team know or apply online at [www.carecredit.com](http://www.carecredit.com).

**Prescription refills** - To allow our staff to provide the in-depth care necessary for our patients, we require 48 hours' notice for prescription refills. Per FDA regulations, dispensed medications may not be returned to VSC (CPG sec. 460.300).

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*Veterinary Specialty Center is guided by the belief that companion animals deserve state-of-the-art medical care in a kind and comforting environment. The courage of our patients, the loyalty of their human families, and the devotion of our referral veterinarians inspire our vision. It is sustained by the contributions of our compassionate, knowledgeable and dedicated staff and built upon a tradition of providing unsurpassed healthcare for animals.*

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