

Passive Range of Motion

Exercise is defined as the *active* (movement caused by the patient's voluntary muscle contractions) or *passive* (movement caused by an external force) movement of joints and limbs. Controlled passive exercise after a period of immobilization allows healing ligaments and tendons to become stronger and to have greater gliding ability than they would if they were not exercised during the healing process. Controlled passive exercise also improves muscle endurance and prevents atrophy, as well as stimulates reflex nerve transmission.

Please use the following technique:

1. With your pet lying on his/her side with the affected limb up, slowly move the limb in a bicycling motion.
2. Flex/bend (**Figure 1**) and extend/straighten (**Figure 2**) the involved joint or the entire limb in a bicycling fashion for a series of ten repetitions.

You may notice some stiffness in your pet's limb while performing this exercise. This is to be expected. As your pet becomes stronger, he/she may start to resist this process. This is not only expected, but it should be encouraged.



Figure 1

3. Flex and extend the joint to its limit until there is resistance. Stretching scar tissue and contracted muscle is the goal and will not be comfortable for your pet at first. However, nothing should be forced.
4. Maintain a tolerable yet consistent pattern of exercise. You may find the need to start with less than 10 repetitions and work your way up to 10 repetitions over time. Ultimately, your goal should be to do this passive range of motion exercise 2-3 times daily.

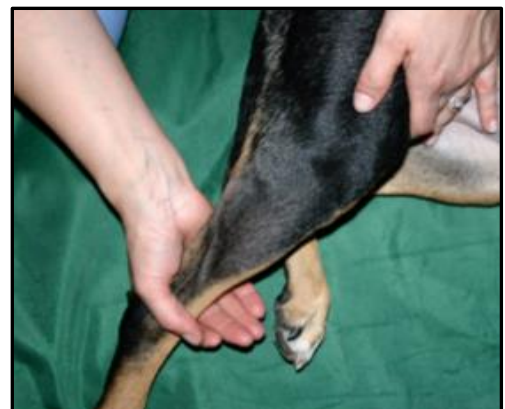


Figure 2

A technician will review these instructions and demonstrate this technique with you during your pet's release appointment. Please feel free to contact the hospital if you have any questions and/or concerns regarding this procedure.