



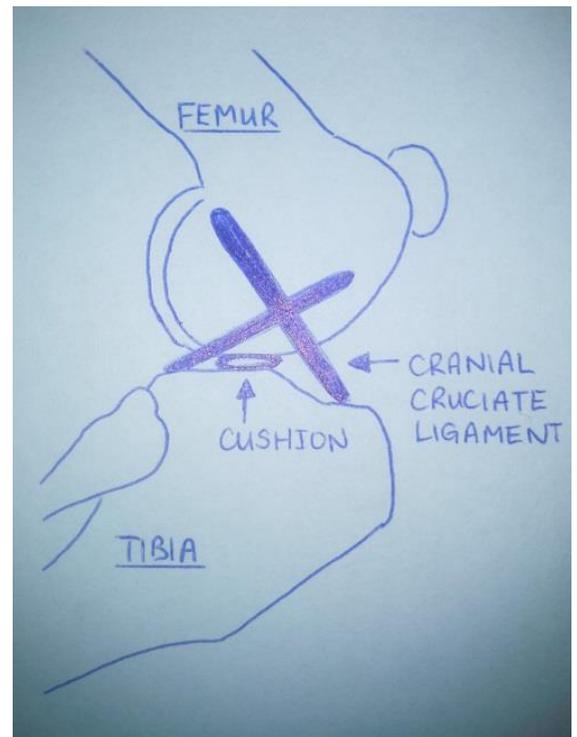
Cruciate Disease

The cruciate ligament is an X-shaped ligament in the dog's knee which helps attach the upper leg to the lower leg, provides stability, and allows the knee to move smoothly in both directions.

Unfortunately, it is a ligament which is quite commonly injured in dogs, either through trauma or due to underlying disease in the knee joint such as arthritis.

When the ligament is damaged the knee is unstable and it becomes very painful for your dog to use the limb. Some dogs will suddenly develop a significant limp or refuse to use the injured leg at all, while others will develop a 'waxing and waning' limp. In addition, the instability can lead to further damage of the ligament itself and the soft cushion which normally sits between the bones, both of which can contribute to long term arthritis and pain in the knee joint.

Once the ligament has been damaged it is important that we promptly diagnose the injury and discuss treatment options in order to help minimize further damage. In order to diagnose this injury we will need to give your pet a general anaesthetic and take X-rays of the joint.



If X-rays and palpation of the joint under anaesthesia confirm that this ligament is in fact ruptured, we have two options:

The first option is surgical repair. Surgery is associated with the quickest healing time and the best possible outcome, particularly in larger dogs who are, by nature, going to place more weight/stress on the limb. Surgery significantly decreases the risk of debilitating arthritis, though some arthritis will remain and will continue to progress with age. Surgery aims to clean up any damage within the knee and place implants to provide long term stability and support to the joint.

Due to the nature of this procedure we use a specialist orthopaedic surgeon who operates in the southern suburbs of Perth. By referring you and your pet to a specialist we are confident that you will receive a fantastic level of care and have the best possible long term outcome.

The second option is cage rest and involves pain relief in conjunction with STRICT cage rest for 6-8 weeks. The outcome of this approach is variable as it relies on the body's ability to achieve a small amount of stability through the formation of scar tissue around the joint. Generally speaking this approach is reserved for smaller dogs as larger dogs simply are not able to achieve the stability they require to prevent debilitating arthritis in the joint.

Injuries to the cruciate ligament can be painful and debilitating for your pet. However, with early diagnosis and advances in specialist surgical techniques and pain management we should be able to achieve an excellent outcome for your pet and help them to regain full use of the limb and remain comfortable as they grow older.

Open from 7am, 7 days a week

ABN 54 483 191 873