

Fractures (Broken Bones)

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Overview

A fracture is a break in a bone and can occur in any bone. Some, like spinal fractures, have a higher priority to treat. The symptoms that arise with fractures are based on the body part injured and any organ damage. Fractures are usually caused by a traumatic event; however, pathologic fractures can occur from relatively low energy events when preexisting disease such as a tumor or a metabolic bone disease like rickets weakens the bone. Some breeds are also susceptible to particular fractures based on their anatomy, conformation and use (such as hunting or racing).

Because of the trauma involved with a fracture, it is imperative that your pet be checked for concurrent traumatic injuries. Though your pet's fracture may seem traumatic, rarely is the fracture by itself a cause for urgent surgical treatment. Your pet should first be evaluated for shock, neurological problems and injury to internal organs.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Fractures are typically diagnosed through physical examination findings and x-rays of the affected area.
- Treatment depends on the affected bone, additional injuries, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Depending on the bone, the fracture may be temporarily stabilized with a splint or bandage. Casting and/or surgery may eventually be necessary. Additional injuries should also be treated. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Lameness
- Abnormal angle of a limb
- Painfulness
- Paralysis
- Extreme weakness or depression
- Difficulty breathing
- Abdominal discomfort or distention
- Change in mental status

** Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*