Femoral Head and Neck Ostectomy

Shelter pets may have been exposed to conditions that are contagious and should be kept separate from other pets for at least 10 days.

Femoral Head and Neck ostectomy surgery is the removal of the “ball” of the ball-and-socket of the hip joint. This surgery is performed for hip problems such as a fracture to the hip, hip luxation, and severe arthritis. After the surgery the muscle present in that hip is what keeps the femur in place and over time scar tissue will form a “false joint” so it is very important to follow the post-operative physical therapy that AHS has in place for your foster pet. Your foster pet should be using the limb a couple of days after surgery. If your foster pet is not using the limb more than a week after surgery you will need to call and schedule an appointment as soon as possible with Second Chance Foster Concierge at Ext. 2068.

Your foster pet will need to wear an e-collar at all times until the staples are removed, usually 10-14 days after surgery. Monitor the incision for redness with heat, swelling, bleeding, or discharge. The first appointment for your foster pet will be for staple removal at 10-14 days after surgery.

The next appointment after that will be 4 weeks after the surgery as either a drop off for radiographs or a recheck of gait. This depends on the preference of the veterinarian that performed the surgery. At this
appointment, the veterinarian will assess your foster pet’s progress and determine when your foster pet will need to be seen again. It is also important that your foster pet keeps an ideal weight so as not to put extra strain on the surgical site which could possibly prevent it from healing properly. The fostering period for an animal recovering from a FHO is about 4-8 weeks, but there are cases of longer treatment time needed.

**Post OP Physical Therapy**

Post OP FHO (2-3 sessions per day)
Below are instructions for immediate post-op rehabilitation of the FHO patient. If your pet seems painful or becomes aggressive at any time while performing any of these therapies, STOP. Never push beyond your pet's comfort level.
Perform with your pet lying down on his/her side with the surgical leg up. Only perform to your pet's comfort level.

**Stifle**: Place one hand on the thigh and gently grasp the foot with the other. Very gently and slowly, apply pressure with the hand that is on the thigh, straightening the knee, using the hand on the foot to guide the leg downward. **NEVER** pull the leg with the foot. Stop where you feel your pet resist and hold for 15 seconds, relax, repeat.

**Hock (ankle)**: Place one hand against the bottom of the foot and gently and slowly push upward toward the body. Stop where you feel your pet resist and hold for 15 seconds, relax, repeat.

**Hip**: Place one hand on the thigh and gently and slowly push leg backward (toward tail). Stop where you feel your pet resist and hold for 15 seconds, relax, repeat.

**Torso Strengthening**: Gently place hands on either side of the hips and rock your foster pet from side to side, while in a standing position, thus engaging the core torso muscles and promoting hind limb weight bearing. Once your foster pet tenses, stop, rest, and then perform exercise again. Repeat 5-10x

**Cookies on The Steps**: Have your foster pet take a treat while its front feet are up on something acceptable and stable (steps, couch, etc.) Start low and work to increase the incline, thus extension of the hip. Hold this position for 5-40 seconds, and then return to ground and rest. Repeat exercise 5-10 times.

**Dancing (weeks 3 & 4 if doing well)**: Lift your foster pet's torso low off the ground while holding their front legs on the forearm above the wrist. Pull and push your pet gently back and forth. Make sure they are standing at an angle and not straight up. Start with a very mild incline off the ground. Depending on the size of your foster pet you may have to bend over to do this. Make sure you are physically ok to do
this exercise and do not strain your own back. Have your foster pet take a few steps back and forth; replace their front limb to the ground and rest. Repeat exercise 5-10x.

Once the staples are removed and the incision has healed your foster pet can go swimming for 5 minutes the first time and by the second week swim for 10 minutes at a time. Always supervise your foster pet when swimming.

Please give all medications prescribed by an AHS veterinarian and always get approval prior to giving your foster pet anything not prescribed by an AHS veterinarian.