

Feeding

Attach food and water bowls to the crate at head height, so the dog does not have to bend down to eat and drink. Always provide plenty of fresh water. Dogs on steroids will be thirsty.

Therapy & Exercise

Ask your vet to demonstrate passive range of motion exercises & how to massage the legs during post op rest for the paralyzed dog. Use the orange search bar to find tips and video: dodgerslist.com/range-of-motion-massage/

Ask your vet about underwater treadmill for post-op cases or after 8 weeks of conservative treatment have been completed.

Acupuncture and Laser Light Therapy

Acupuncture and Laser Light Therapy can be started immediately with surgery cases. Seek a mobile vet for at-home therapy for dogs under STRICT rest of conservative treatment. Avoid Laser therapy with cancer or tumors.

Avoid VOM, chiro, or any manipulation of the spine with IVDD dogs.

Weight

It is crucial the dog maintain a healthy weight to reduce stress on the spine. After crate rest, ask your vet when your dog's diet can start and follow the guidelines of your vet or canine nutritionist regarding weight-loss goals. Avoid a "diet" foods. Opt for a good quality, high-protein kibble, just using less of it. Take excess weight off over a one to two month period.

Calmers

Is your dog rambunctious? Ask your vet about Rescue Remedy Pet, plain Benadryl, or some other calming aid. It is imperative that during the healing period the dog rests. Jumping against the recovery suite's sides is not resting. The dog must remain calm.

Disclaimer: This information is presented for educational purposes as a resource for the Dachshund community. The coordinators are not veterinarians or health care professionals. Nothing herein should be interpreted as medical advice and all should contact their pet-care professionals for advice. The coordinators are not responsible for the substance and content contained herein and do not advocate any particular product, item, or position contained herein.

Slings

Sling for supportive footsteps during potty break can be an ace bandage or a long scarf. Many male dogs do not like anything touching their penis and find a figure-8 sling to be preferable.

Connect two leash handles and form into figure-8 with stretchable, self-adhering Vetwrap®. One leg fits in each loop.



Wheelchair

And finally, don't be too quick to get a cart. Many dogs don't ever need them. Assess whether money is better spent on a wheelchair or PT to learn to walk again only after the initial recovery period of 6 to 8 weeks.

Nerves are the slowest part of the body to heal – it can take as long as 6 months or even close to a year for nerve healing.



Know that it IS in the cards for your dog to get back to enjoying life after the recovery period. What makes a great deal of difference is your own self education. Knowledge is the best defense in fighting and winning with this disease!

STRICT Rest Recovery Process

for Intervertebral Disc Disease

"Recovery Suite with Room Service"
Tips on delivering effective STRICT rest recovery



Website offering education for owners of all breeds suffering from disc disease



It is imperative to keep the dog quiet 24/7 during the recovery period of 6 weeks post surgery or 8 weeks if the dog is recuperating with conservative treatment (crate rest and medical management). One benefit of surgery is physical therapy can start soon after. Conservatively treated dogs, however, follow a plan of 8 weeks of 100% STRICT rest 24/7 to allow the disc to fully heal. Dogs on conservative treatment are limited to only a few minimal footsteps at potty time. Follow your surgeon's or veterinarian's instructions.

Options for recovery suites

Wire crates are tolerated well by most dogs over the plastic airline crates. Playpens or ex-pens are other options. Size of the suite should only be big enough to stand up, turn around and when lying down to fully stretch out legs.



A suite provides a flat, always horizontal and firm surface supportive of the back during recovery. The suite prevents bolting and keep others from bothering the healing dog. Only a recovery suite can provide protection while the disc is healing. (No couches, no beds, no laps, no dog beds unless it is inside a suite). Avoid giving toys that promote tugging, head shaking, or pulling activities. Keep the suite in the family room so your dog does not feel alone.



Medication information

Know medication side effects. Ask your pharmacist for the information sheet. **Use the orange search bar** to learn about the meds your dog is on: dodgerslist.com/pain-medications/

Incontinence supplies

Dogs abhor having body waste near them. Proper bladder and poop expressing keeps a dog clean and the bladder healthy.

Avoid ointments containing zinc. Toxic if ingested.

Use unscented baby wipes or dampen a washcloth with brewed cooled decaf green tea to avoid urine scald. Tea leaves a fresh smell on skin and fur. Baths are too risky during conservative treatment.

Use white vinegar in a spray bottle to disinfect and remove the urine ammonia smell from floors, linens, etc.



Constipation

Meds such as sucralfate, tramadol or surgery-related meds could cause constipation. 1 teaspoon of plain pureed canned pumpkin 1 x a day PLUS soaking kibble with equal parts water for all meals can loosen stools. Hint: freeze pumpkin in teaspoon-size portions to use as needed.

Setting up the interior

A memory foam or egg crate mattress will relieve pressure points on the skin. Enclose mattress in large trash bag to protect it from liquids and close with tape.

No ravel/no sew 100% synthetic fleece can be cut to needed sizes and used as bottom sheet and blankets. 100% synthetic fleece dries quickly and wicks moisture from the skin. Find yardage at local fabric shop.

Downloadables

While at dodgerslist.com, **use the orange search bar** with the subject "[Roadmap](#)" to find "Roadmap to Conservative Treatment" PDF. Find other printable downloads for you: med chart, wallet med reference card, Emergency Flyer for the fridge and much more at dodgerslist.com/strict-rest-recovery-process/

Entertainment

Place the recovery suite near a window with a view, or the crate on the coffee table in front of the couch where you sit. Place the recovery suite so the dog will be in the middle of family activities and a second suite near your bed at night. Secure a crate to a flat moving dolly (or put casters on plywood) to easily move from room to room. Good low-cal snacks are carrots, apples, frozen green beans, or licking a frozen low-sodium broth ice cube.

Potty times

Potty times will be predictable if you have a regular feeding schedule. Paralyzed dogs will need to be expressed every 3-4 hours while on steroids. Walking dogs will also need to be taken outside more often when on these drugs. Paralyzed dogs can also be expressed for poop. **Use the orange search bar** for video plus tips: dodgerslist.com/bladder-bowel-care/

Always carry your dog to and from the potty area. Support both ends of the dog. Use a six-foot leash attached to a harness (no more collars) and a sling to stabilize the rear. Stand in one spot to minimize the number of footsteps your dog takes. Or a 6 foot diameter ex-pen outdoors can limit sniff fests and footsteps.

