

ANIMAL Physiotherapy Services

Neurological Physiotherapy Information Sheet

Animals can suffer from a variety of neurological conditions and referral to Physiotherapy means your pet will receive the same standard of care that any other member of your family would receive in a human hospital.

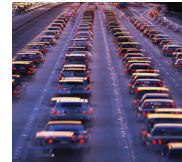
This is because it takes 8 years to qualify as an Animal Physiotherapist, and our team is one of the most qualified and experienced in the world in working with small animals with neurological conditions—Helen teaches Canine Neurological Rehabilitation courses overseas each year and recently contributed to a textbook on the subject. If you're anything like we are with our own pets, you'll have lots of questions about your pet's care, so please read the following and feel welcome to contact us should you have any further questions. (Email Helen Nicholson on info@k9physio.com or phone (02) 4739 4557)

What happens at Physio?

After discussing the case with the Vet, the Physiotherapist performs a thorough assessment and formulates an individualized Physiotherapy program. You are given a written "homework" program which you are taught to do competently prior to leaving the appointment and are encouraged to perform most days of the week at home. We have to do this because we can't rely on animals to remember to do their exercises, but we make sure as many of them are as fun as possible! The homework is then upgraded at regular review appointments to ensure your pet is progressing optimally and that we get on top of any complications or compensations as quickly as possible.

How does neurological Physiotherapy work?

A neurological condition can be thought of as somewhat like a traffic jam on the freeway.

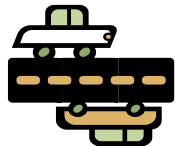


Initially the cars on the freeway can't get between North and South, and so the Physiotherapist must work on setting up a detour along an alternate route,

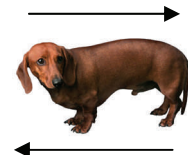
whilst simultaneously trying to clear the crashed cars from the freeway.



Studies examining the effectiveness of Physiotherapy have been performed on people and on cats and reveal that indeed a mixed proportion of signals (cars) travel along new pathways (the alternate route) and along repaired existing pathways (the freeway) as a result of prompt, conscientious Physiotherapy exercises.



Some of these exercises work on getting traffic flowing from North to South (brain to feet) whilst others work on the traffic from South to North (feet to brain).



Research shows that it is vital that Physiotherapy is commenced as soon after injury as possible, and that the exercises are performed correctly and frequently enough to have the desired effect. Depending on the severity of your pet's condition, you may need to do between one and three batches of Physiotherapy "homework" a day to ensure the best possible results.

But most importantly, the cat research clearly shows that Physiotherapy gives a better outcome than allowing the animal to recover spontaneously, and that if Physiotherapy is ceased, patients can show deteriorations in balance, step length and other important safety considerations—researchers therefore recommend continuing exercises to maintain the improvements made with Physiotherapy and you will therefore be given a "maintenance homework plan" to work on upon discharge from regular Physiotherapy appointments. Don't panic! Five or 10 minutes incorporated into your daily interactions with your pet (for example, some balance exercises for food rewards at dinner time) will seem like a breeze compared to the hard work you now face. We promise to do everything we can to support you during this difficult time and look forward to working with you.

Wishing your pet a speedy recovery