



# FEMORAL HEAD AND NECK OSTECTOMY (FHO)

## **ANATOMY:**

The hip is a ball and socket joint composed of the acetabulum (socket in the pelvis) and femoral head (ball that connects to the leg). It is held in place by a strong round ligament and surrounding joint capsule and supported by heavy musculature.

## **INDICATIONS FOR SURGERY:**

FHO surgery is most commonly performed for fractures and luxations of the hip joint, but is also performed as a salvage procedure for severe hip dysplasia.

## **PROCEDURE:**

During FHO surgery, the head of the femur (ball) and neck are removed with a saw or drill. There are specific landmarks for removal to make sure there is no bony interference. The end result is scar tissue that forms across the joint called a pseudarthrosis. While it is not a normal joint, it is pain-free and highly functional. Since the joint is being removed, animals cannot develop arthritis and long term pain is minimal to none. Cats and small dogs do best with FHO, but large dogs can do well with appropriate postoperative rehabilitation.

## **COMPLICATIONS:**

Complications are uncommon following FHO surgery and can usually be treated with aggressive rehabilitation. Complications can be prevented by following the postoperative instructions given to you by your surgeon. Potential complications following FHO surgery include infection and a change in gait. This gait change is a functional lameness due to the change in weight bearing forces and not a pain-related lameness.

**Questions?**

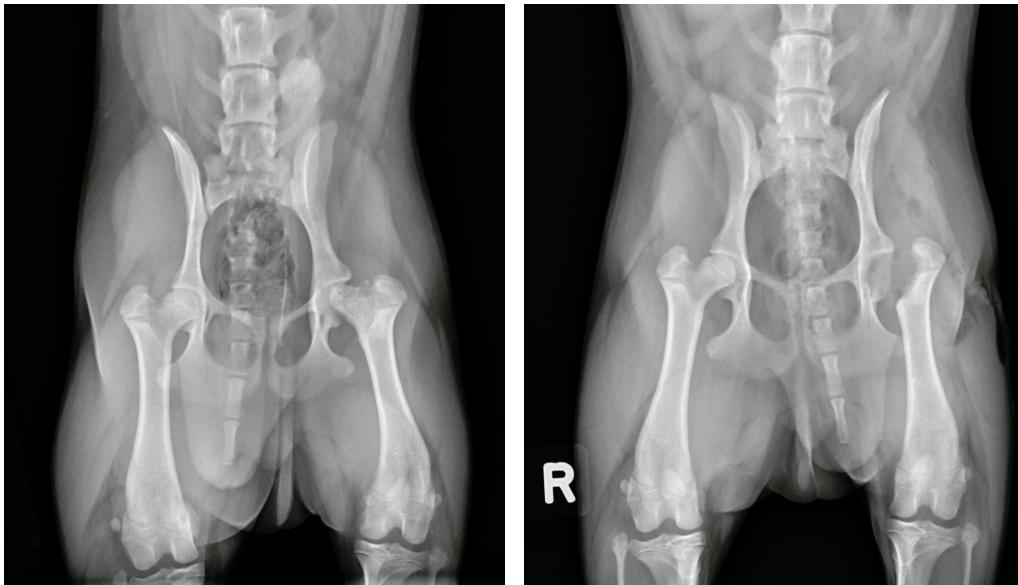


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Radiographs of the pelvis of a dog before and after FHO

### **POSTOPERATIVE CARE:**

Full recovery time is approximately 3-4 months. FHO recovery is unique from most other surgeries in that we want animals to be active immediately after surgery. After the incision has healed (~10 days), animals are allowed unrestricted activity. Leash walks, running and playing are encouraged. Physical therapy and range of motion exercises are strongly encouraged.

### **FOLLOW-UP:**

Recheck visits are planned two weeks following surgery for removal of skin sutures. A recheck visit at 6-8 weeks after surgery is performed to evaluate healing and determine if your pet needs to continue physical therapy or can return to normal.

