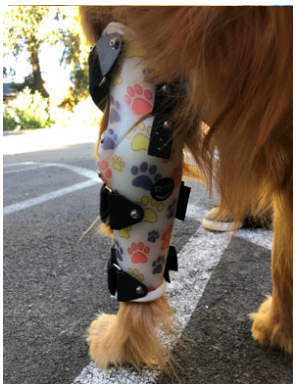
Healing Arts ANIMAL CARE
PHYSICAL THERAPY • REHABILITATION • ACUPUNCTURE

EXOPETS™ EMBRACE MOBILITY

Tips and Tricks for an ExoPets Device

Here are a few tips and tricks to assist with acclimating your pet to the device:

- We encourage parents to use verbal rewards, treats or favorite toy motivators when using the device. We want your pet to associate “fun times” with the device.
- SLOW and SHORT leash walks. It is important to have your pet in “heel" position on a short leash. The slower the walk, the more evenly weight will be distributed to each limb. Frequent short walks are more useful than long walks.
- Walking UP and DOWN stairs on a short leash will teach your pet to place the affected leg normally while wearing the device. Be certain that your family veterinarian is ok with stair walking.
- Gently rock your pet's weight onto the affected leg 5-10 times several times per day. This encourages weight bearing. If this seems painful, please contact your family veterinarian.
- Practice basic obedience commands (SIT-STAND-LAY DOWN). This encourages use of the affected limb in the device. A veterinary rehabilitation specialist can give advice on proper technique for maximum limb use.
- We suggest walking your pet alone (without other pets) for the first two weeks. This allows both of you to focus on the acclimation to the device.
- Your pet should never be left alone with the device on for the first few weeks, and should never be left in a crate or kennel with the device on (in special cases this may not apply).



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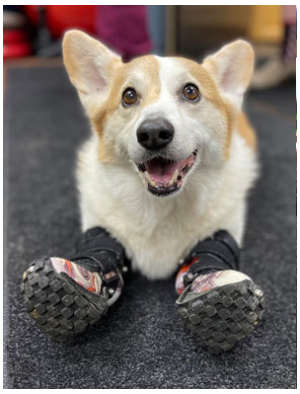
Wearing Schedule

Wearing Schedule for Week 1:

Please note each time you take the device off your pet, please check the leg for any redness on the skin and check inside of the device for any reddish smudge marks on the liner. If you notice either one of these two issues, please take a few pictures and contact us. Our email is appt@healingartsanimalcare.com.



- 3-4 wearing sessions per day
- Each wearing session will consist of 1-2 hours

Example:

- 7am to 8am
- 10am to 11:30am
- 1pm-3pm
- 4pm-6 p

Wearing Schedule for Week 2:

Please note each time you take the device off your pet, please check the leg for any redness on the skin and check inside of the device for any reddish smudge marks on the liner. If you notice either one of these two issues, please take pictures and contact us via email at appt@healingartsanimalcare.com.

- 3-4 wearing sessions per day
- Each wearing session will consist of 3-4 hours.

Example:

- 7am to 10am
- 12am to 3pm
- 4pm-7pm
- 8pm-10pm

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Adjustments:

ExoPets and Healing Arts Animal Care will stand behind the quality of the products that they provide. ExoPets will work with us to solve any issues that may arise according to the customer contract. They provide 2 (TWO) complementary adjustments to the device in the first 2 months on the date of the initial delivery. Customer is responsible for shipping charges of the device to and from ExoPets. After the 2 months, ExoPets will be happy to continue to provide support and assistance at an additional fee. We suggest that you do check in with us every 12 months for a refurbishment to the device. We want to partner with you to have your pet back to their active lifestyle they once had. Please communicate any concerns, and we look forward to viewing pictures of your pet!

We've all been shopping for shoes and found that despite being the "right size" the shoe just doesn't fit your foot. Maybe you have short toes, a tall arch, or a wide ball of the foot – your shoes will fit differently and maybe even give you blisters when it fits your friend with the same size perfectly. Going back to the shoe analogy – if you never wore high heels shoes in your life, you probably wouldn't put them on for the first time and go dancing. Same is true for a device. Dogs need to learn how to trust it and use it properly or all that physics goes to waste and the dog won't bear weight normally in the device. And finally, even after you have a show that fits perfectly in the store, you can still get blisters at home, and need to make adjustments to the show. The same is true of our devices.

- Despite all our checks and double checks, adjustments go with any device. Some adjustments are as simple as moving a strap or changing a pad, others require further at our clinic and still others require return to ExoPets. One return to ExoPets adjustment is covered in your contract and 2 at Healing Arts within the first 60 days.
- We will not fit a brace if there will be no follow up afterwards (but do video appointments for our long-distance travelers).
- All devices that are long term should be refurbished once annually.

Care of your ExoPets Custom Made Device

Refurbishment Your ExoPets custom-made device will likely need a full refurbishment every 12-24 months. A refurbishment is a replacement of all soft goods including but not limited to: foam and/or neoprene liners, straps, pads, tread and hardware. Additional modifications depending on their assessment of the device. The cost for a full refurbishment will depend on the type of device and componentry involved. A standard range is $200- $450 + shipping. A full refurbishment will take 1-3 business days to complete.

Prosthetic or Removable Liner If your pet's device has a removable foam liner, you have the option to order replacements for an additional fee.

Neoprene liner can be washed in the washing machine, but needs to be air dried. Exposing neoprene to high heat may cause it to shrink. **Please do not place neoprene in the dryer.** A new liner can be ordered through ExoPets for an additional fee.

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External Plastic/Internal Foam of the device can be cleaned using a washcloth, mild soap and warm water. ExoPets devices are waterproof and can be easily cleaned so feel free to let your pet swim in their device.

Pads can be washed in the washing machine but need to be air dried. Exposing pads to high heat may cause the pads to shrink. **Please do not put them in the dryer.** If you have pads that are not made of neoprene please discuss with your Case Manager ways that they can be cleaned.

Velcro Straps Over time, hair might become caught in the Velcro portion of the fastening straps. The Velcro can be cleaned using a wire dog or cat slicker grooming brush. Please contact ExoPets if you feel that you need to order new straps. If the straps are attached using screws, new straps can be purchased and sent to you. If they are attached with rivets, your device will need to be sent to ExoPets for strap replacement.

Device Tread The tread on your custom made device will wear down just like the sole of a shoe and will need to be replaced. There are a few different tread options ExoPets may use for your pet's custom-made device. In some cases, a bike tire similar to what you would find on a mountain bike has been zip- tied or bolted to the bottom of the device. This can be replaced as needed by purchasing a bike tire from a local store and replacing the tread in the same way that it was previously attached. If you do not have a zip- tied on tread, your device likely has tread called "Cherry" or "Tope". This will need to be changed by the staff at ExoPets as needed. It is very important to not allow the tread to wear down to the shell or it may cause irreversible damage to your device ending in costly repairs or a remake of all or a portion of the device.

Screws Please check the screws on your device every few days and tighten as needed using a Phillips screw driver or a 2.5mm Allen wrench. *In some cases you may need to use a 2.0mm Allen wrench or your device may have rivets.*

- 2.5mm Allen wrench head: 8M thread, 8mm long. Some cases may have 10 or 12mm
- **Phillips head:** 3/8 thread, 8/32" long, some cases 1/2" long

Long Term Care

Depending on your pet's condition we recommend at least 2 times per year follow-up care appointments. During these appointments our ExoPets staff at Healing Arts will assess the following:

- Fit of the device
- Condition of the device
- Proper function of the device
- Current state of the injury
- Whether the device continues to meet therapeutic goals
- Whether further rehab is needed

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Rehabilitation

The Role of Rehabilitation in Veterinary Orthotic and Prosthetic Use

Whether your dog undergoes surgery or not, use of an orthosis or prosthesis will require some learning and some rehabilitation.

Goals:

(1) **Device acclimation**: The device is foreign at first. Remember putting a collar and leash on the first time? Your pet will figure out the easiest way to get around with the device on, but that is not always the correct or best way. Behavioral techniques can facilitate proper use.

(2) **Learn basic life skills** while wearing the device. These include: transitions (sitting, lying down, and getting up), stairs, getting into vehicles safely, managing on different types of surfaces (concrete, grass, carpet, hardwood floor, etc.), going through the dog door, and so on.

(3) **Balance, coordination, and proprioception.** Whether the original injury causes a problem with balance or wearing the device alters balance at first, a rehabilitation plan will improve weight-bearing, balance, coordination and proprioception (joint movement and paw placement in space).

(4) **Gait re-education**. The original injury and initial use of the device will alter proper gaiting mechanics at the walk, trot, and run. Rehabilitation techniques normalize ambulation for comfort and efficiency.

(5) **Muscle strengthening and neuromuscular re-education**. All injuries weaken muscles and alter the coordination of nerve impulses and muscle action. The final goal of rehabilitation is to rebuild muscle function. This can't happen until steps 1-4 occur. So proper sequence is important.

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