

CONSERVATIVE CARE FOR INTERVERTEBRAL DISC DISEASE (IVDD)

Your pet has been diagnosed with IVDD and is being managed **conservatively**, without surgery. This treatment is suitable for pets with mild signs such as pain or slight wobbliness but who are still able to walk.

Successful recovery depends heavily on **strict rest and supportive care** to allow the spinal cord time to heal and reduce inflammation.

What to Expect

Conservative treatment typically lasts **4–6 weeks** and aims to:

- Relieve spinal cord inflammation
- Prevent further disc damage
- Restore comfortable mobility over time

1. Strict Confinement

Your pet must be confined to a small space—such as a crate, pen, or small room—for the entire recovery period.

✓ Acceptable:

- Crate, playpen, or laundry-sized room
- Leash walks *only* to toilet (no stairs, running, or jumping)
- Short, controlled outings (always supervised)

✗ Not allowed:

- Jumping on/off furniture
- Playing with other pets
- Climbing stairs
- Unsupervised access to house or yard

2. Pain Management

Pain relief is essential for healing. Your vet may prescribe:

- **Anti-inflammatories** (e.g., meloxicam, carprofen)
- **Muscle relaxants**
- **Neuropathic pain medications** (e.g., gabapentin)

Please **follow all medication instructions** carefully. Contact us if you miss a dose or have concerns.

3. Monitor for Changes

Watch closely for any of the following and contact us immediately if they occur:

- Increased pain or vocalisation
- Loss of coordination or worsening wobbliness
- Loss of ability to walk or stand
- Difficulty urinating or defecating

These may indicate spinal cord worsening and require reassessment.

4. Nutrition & Hygiene

- Feed your pet as normal unless advised otherwise
- Monitor stool and urine output
- Keep bedding clean and dry—accidents can happen if mobility is reduced

5. Gradual Recovery Plan

After the initial confinement phase, a **rehabilitation plan** will be introduced, including:

- Controlled, short leash walks
- Basic home exercises
- Referral to an animal physiotherapist if needed

Please follow your vet's timeline before increasing activity.

Prognosis

Most pets with mild signs respond well to conservative care:

- **50–80%** improve with strict rest and medication
- However, **relapse is possible**, especially if activity is resumed too soon

If your pet worsens or does not improve, surgery may become necessary.

Recheck

A recheck appointment is typically recommended after **4 weeks** to assess progress and adjust the treatment plan. Please book this with our receptionist.

We're here to help—don't hesitate to call us with any questions or concerns about your pet's recovery.