

*Reprinted and distributed with permission*

**Best Friends Animal Health Center**  
**3163 Prospector Drive**  
**Casper, Wyoming 82604**  
**(307) 235-4889**  
**(307) 235-5646 fax**  
[www.casperbestfriends.com](http://www.casperbestfriends.com)

July 7, 2004

Dr. Weinsten  
Veterinary Insurance Company

Dear Dr. Weinsten,

I have been asked to write about my experiences with the Product “**DogLeggs**”. This remarkable product was first brought to my attention while doing follow up chemotherapy on a very large Rottweiler dog diagnosed with osteosarcoma. The dog’s tumor involved a front leg and when I began seeing him he had already had his leg amputated and his first round of chemotherapy at Colorado State University. As you know, osteosarcoma is a particularly aggressive cancer and a challenging one to manage as the animals usually go through their remaining life as three-legged patients. It is over-represented in large breed dogs, often the same breeds that suffer from joint problems and arthritis. Luckily this dog had wonderful joints health but, the remaining front leg had to bear the full 60% of his weight, especially while lying down and trying to arise. The owner sought out **DogLeggs** and they truly reduced ancillary problems and made his quality of life much better. It improved mine as well; I did not have to fight the pressure wounds and related infections while administering immune suppressing chemotherapy.

Since that time I have had several other cases where **DogLeggs** have been invaluable.

### **The Broken Pelvis**

The first was in a Siberian Husky who suffered a badly broken pelvis after being hit by a vehicle. We inadvertently found another valuable use of the **DogLeggs** while caring for this case. Dogs with this injury are unable to stand or move around for a long period of time and often also urinate and defecate on themselves. This soiling hastens the appearance of pressure sores and skin infections and adds to the general discomfort of the dog. Heavy coated dogs make the situation a nightmare.

This dog was particularly difficult to care for as she would try to bite when ever we went to move her. It is usual to use an underbelly sling to lift the dog to a standing position. This shifts the pelvis, causing them pain and also to urinate on themselves and their caregivers before they are even off the ground. The dogs usually resist by trying to crawl forward or refusing to stand on their front legs. This compounds the difficulties and pain caused in getting them to stand. Keeping a sling in place all the time, adds to the problems of urine scald. Putting the sling in place each time puts the staff member in danger of being bitten and so requires additional staff. Therefore it is done less than it probably should be.

We had already placed an adjustable pair of **DogLeggs** on this dog to protect her elbows while she was down. We started raising her up into a steady standing position (remember 60% of the dog's weight is in the front end) using the **DogLeggs** and then using her tail as well to place the rear legs beneath her. Thus the handler was in a safer position, the dog wasn't as painful so didn't mind this as much and would try harder to stand and walk on her own. We also avoided forcing the urine out of her bladder while she was lying down. In doing it this way we were able to better control her urinations and keep her cleaner and drier. It was wonderful.

## **The Brachial Plexus Avulsion and Femoral Fracture of the Same Side**

Again, with two disabled legs on the same side, a dog can be difficult to get up to keep clean and manage. Moreover Neurologists recommend that 30 days be given to allow time for a paralyzed front leg to show signs of neurological function. A single front leg paralysis is difficult to manage for 30 days for several reasons: the dead weight of the leg creates balance problems for the dog and the foot often becomes abraded from being dragged. Possibly from the abrasions or from phantom sensation, the dog often begins to chew on it, and without sensation of pain, the wounds can be irreparable.

Even after surgical repair of the femoral fracture, this dog could not get up on because of balance issues coupled with the pain from the fractured rear leg. We put the adjustable **DogLeggs** on her and one person was able to easily and quickly help her. Interestingly, the design and material of that particular style of **DogLeggs** kept the disabled front leg in a neutrally flexed position. This kept the foot off of the ground and the leg closer to her body helping her balance better. We went through the entire period with no abrasions and no chewing.

## **Elbow abscesses from pressure sores**

Two other cases involve the same family. They own an automotive garage and their dogs go daily with them to work. The dogs are very large and older; one recently developed Diabetes Mellitus and the second is in old age decline. These two dogs have each developed nasty elbow abscesses, I believe from small metal splinters common to the setting. They were already prone to pressure sores because of their age and the fact that they both prefer lying directly on the concrete.

These types of wounds are difficult and expensive to treat as they involve frequent trips to the vet for bandage changes. They cannot go more than 2 days without changing and the area is also difficult to bandage, requiring close veterinary supervision. If the bandage is not applied properly or if it slips, it bunches up at the elbow cutting off the circulation to the lower part of the limb. In a worse case scenario, tissue death can occur from loss of circulation.

Here is the best part of our discovery. I found that, with the adjustable **DogLeggs**, the owner could be sent home with light bandage materials and could easily and safely change the bandage daily, which is optimal. She would place Telfa pads on the wound and Velcro the DogLeggs in place without risk of circulation obstruction. With this particular design, she didn't have to remove the entire device and could do it with the dog lying down. The fenestrations allow air to get to the wound, benefiting healing. The dog is comfortable and is a better patient, not licking at the area or chewing at the wraps. **DogLeggs** are highly washable and durable (if not chewed). When the second dog developed the same wound, the owner started treating it immediately while waiting for an appointment with me.

I think we might order some customized **DogLeggs** with leather elbow pads for these dogs. They would be even more preventative and give them a comfortable, collegiate style.

## **Necrotic Shoulder Skin Flap Avulsion**

As with elbow abscesses, the versatile design of **DogLeggs** allowed me to place and monitor wet-to dry bandages over a 10 cm by 20 cm necrotic and avulsed skin wound of a dog's shoulder easily. I was able to increase the frequency of changes and reduce the material necessary to cover the wound. The dog also initially had a front leg paresis. As mentioned above, the design was able to help us comfortably support him when moving him around and assisting him to stand.

I expect to keep finding more valuable uses for **DogLeggs** and have ordered several sets to sell to clients in my clinic. I think they are excellent preventative medicine devices. Moreover, they have allowed me to feel more comfortable allowing my clients to nurse their dogs at home safely, easily, with less cost and better, faster results.

If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to call upon me.

Yours truly,

Lori Maness DVM

Reprinted and distributed with the permission of Dr. Maness, Best Friends Animal Health Center, Casper Wy.