



WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK!

Conservative Treatment 101

***The "Holy Trinity" of Conservative Treatment for IVDD is
Crate Rest, Proper Medication & Alternative Therapies/Allied health providers***

So, you have just arrived back from the vet or specialist and your beloved dachshund has been diagnosed with IVDD. You have NO IDEA what it all means, apart from a long list of words you have never heard before, and you are officially suffering what we at DISA call "brain freeze".

Don't worry!! Make yourself a cuppa or, if it's after 6pm, pour yourself a wine, then take a deep breath, breathe and take a few minutes to read this guide. It will be ok ☺

What has happened to my dog?

The chances are your dog has been diagnosed with IVDD – Intervertebral Disc Disease, a genetic disease which now effects 1:4 dachshunds.

What does this mean?

It means that in some area of your dog's spine, surrounding the vertebrae, calcification has developed around the discs. This has now caused pressure on the spinal cord, and as a result, has manifested itself in showing the signs and symptoms that you are seeing in your dachshund. IVDD has 5 different stages, and the earlier it is diagnosed the better, so that crate rest can commence asap. Stage One is the least affected, and Stage 5, being the worst stage, will be complete paralysis. Rest is absolutely essential to ensure that this pressure being applied to the spinal cord can heal instead of rupture. Any rapid movements, jumping, running or just pulling quickly on a lead can cause this to happen. Crate rest is therefore absolutely essential 100% of the time.

What is conservative therapy?

Conservative treatment simply put is - crate rest, proper medication & alternative therapies. Read on to find out more.

It is important to remember that each dog is different, and so is each herniation, and you and your vet are responsible for your dog's treatment.

If your dog has been diagnosed with a less severe episode, or if surgery is not an option for whatever reason (financial, medical, etc.), conservative treatment is another option.

Please also understand that conservative treatment of IVDD is actually pretty straight forward commonsense stuff and not complicated at all; the most difficult aspect for the human owners is finding patience.

What is crate rest?

Crate rest means your dog is in his crate 24/7, except for toilet breaks, physiotherapy or maybe some quiet cuddle time. Never allow your dog to roam free during crate rest! During crate rest your dachshund is ALWAYS carried to and from its crate. Always use 2 hands to pick up your dog. One hand under the chest and one supporting the back end, keeping the spine aligned. Never let your dog's rear end hang down when picking up or putting down. For example, to toilet your dog, pick your dog up from its crate, attach a collar and lead, walk outside, place dog down and wait. If your dog is paralysed, this will also involve using a sling; sling one end, lead the other. Remember to also pop your dachshund on a lead and wrap it around your wrist etc. during cuddle time, particularly on the lounge. Even dachshunds with IVDD think they are invincible when the door-bell rings ☺



How does crate rest help my dog?

When humans sprain or injure their joints the rule of thumb is RICE (rest, ice, compress and elevate). With dogs it's not possible to do this; so instead we restrict their movement as much as possible, administer anti-inflammatories and pain relief so that the damage discs can regenerate and heal.

What do I need?

A metal crate with a roof -

If your dog has never been crate trained before, there is a good chance he or she is going to give you that typical dachshund "I am not impressed, I hate you and there is absolutely nothing wrong with me" look. Also, we humans are prone to feeling more regretful and upset about the whole event than our dogs. But don't be fooled. Crate rest is exactly what your dachshund needs in order for nature to work its magic and let the healing process to begin.

Why metal?

Past experience has shown dachshunds are great escape artists. Soft crates, and even baby pens, are no contest for a desperate sausage! Of course these items can play a part in conservative therapy as you progress, however start off with a 'trusty old' metal crate with a roof ☺

What other crate accessories do I need?

A comfy crate pad, nothing too soft or spongy. Remember your dog has a bad back and needs support. Lay an absorbent easily washable material underneath your dog; bath mats are quite handy for this. Their favourite blanket and toys; anything to keep them occupied. A water bowl attached to the side of the crate, enabling easy access and less spillage. Coop cups are great for this purpose. If your dog can still toilet on its own to pee, a pad at one end of the crate is handy.

Drugs 101

Anti-inflammatories
Pain relief
Sedatives

How long?

The rule of thumb is that dogs who have a suspected IVDD episode, and have no neurological involvement, should be crate-rested 5 to 6 weeks. Dogs who have any level of neurological involvement should be crate rested AT LEAST 8 WEEKS. Not 10 days, not 2 to 3 weeks. A crate rest period that short is a recipe for another, worse episode.

Alternative therapies

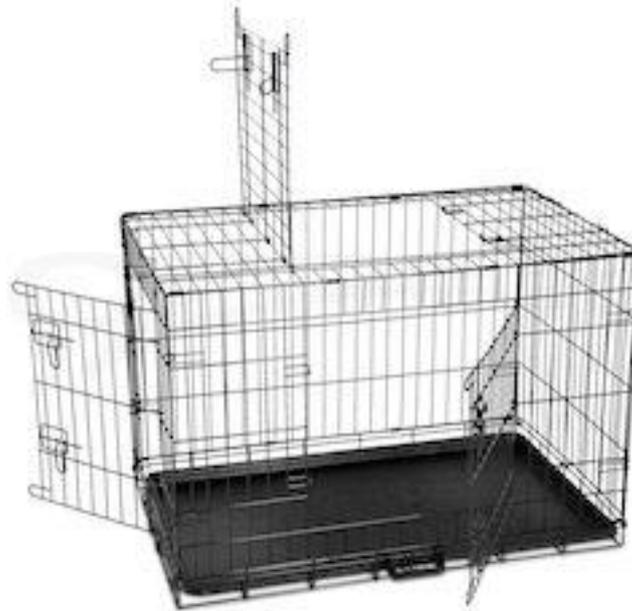
If you don't use it, you lose it. It is highly recommended to seek advice from allied service providers (eg:

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physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, acupuncture, laser treatment) as soon as possible during conservative treatment



REDUCE THE RISK – MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT



Your dog should have a defined waist/ shape from above

Less definition indicates a dog who is slightly overweight

A dog with a bulging waist and no definition is an obese dog

THIS DACHSHUND IS AT AN IDEAL WEIGHT
– it has great definition in the waist

THIS DACHSHUND IS OVERWEIGHT
– there is less definition in the waist

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