

# Applying a Foot Bandage



## Disclaimer

A series of booklets has been developed by the Clinical Skills Lab team (staff, recent graduates and students) from the School of Veterinary Sciences, University of Bristol, UK. Please note:

- Each booklet illustrates one way to perform a skill and it is acknowledged that there are often other approaches. Before using the booklets students should check with their university or college whether the approach illustrated is acceptable in their context or whether an alternative method should be used.
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## Equipment list: Foot Bandage

### Equipment for this station:

- An assistant
- A dog model
- Cotton wool
- Padding bandage e.g. Orthoband, Soffban
- Conforming bandage e.g. Knit-Fix, Easifix
- Cohesive bandage e.g. Vet Wrap, Co-Flex
- Dressing scissors

### Considerations for this station:

- Bandaging material is expensive. Please re-roll and re-use materials.

Anyone working in the Clinical Skills Lab must read the 'CSL\_I01 Induction' and agree to abide by the 'CSL\_I00 House Rules' & 'CSL\_I02 Lab Area Rules'

Please inform a member of staff if equipment is damaged or about to run out.

# Clinical Skills: Foot Bandage



1 Work in pairs. One person applies the bandage, one person is the assistant and can check the 1<sup>st</sup> person's technique.

Ask the assistant to restrain the dog in lateral recumbency, with the paw to be bandaged uppermost. Always select all equipment and open any packaging before starting (in the Clinical Skills Lab please reuse materials and re-roll bandages after practising).



2 Start by placing strips of cotton wool between each of the digits to help prevent the toes rubbing inside the bandage.



3 Place a piece of cotton wool under the metacarpal/tarsal pad (dew claw) if present.



4 Start the padding layer. As the bandage is applied the roll must be on the top of the bandage, to ensure even tension. Starting on the dorsal aspect of the limb, bring the bandage down the limb, over the end of the paw and back up the ventral aspect.

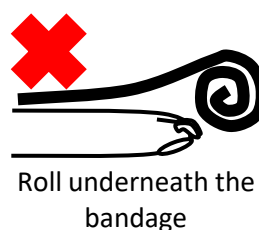


5 Hook the bandage around your fingers on the ventral aspect of the limb, and bring the bandage back around the paw and up the dorsal side, holding it in place on the dorsal side with your thumb.



6 Repeat – bring the bandage over the end of the paw and up the ventral aspect, hold the second layer in place.

Note: The bandage should be placed slightly more medially or laterally to cover more of the paw.





# Clinical Skills: Foot Bandage

7



Take the bandage over the end of the paw and up the dorsal aspect and hook around your thumb again. The bandage should now be the correct way round i.e. the roll is on top of the bandage. Bring the bandage to the distal paw ready to start bandaging up the leg.

8



Pass the bandage circumferentially around the foot.

9



Start bandaging up the leg. Each layer of bandage should overlap the last by about half the width of the bandage.

10



Continue bandaging up the leg, ensuring each layer overlaps the previous one by about half the width of the bandage.

11



Finish the bandage between the carpus and the elbow. For a simple bandage, it is not necessary to bandage back down the leg.

The bandage should end on the caudal aspect of the limb to reduce nibbling! In this practical it may not be possible as materials are re-used.

12



Start the conforming layer. Again, the roll must be on top of the bandage, along the dorsal aspect of the leg.

Use your thumb to hold the top of the bandage in place.



# Clinical Skills: Foot Bandage

13



Pass the bandage around the paw and up the ventral aspect of the limb, hook around your fingers, and bring the bandage back down the ventral aspect of the limb.

14



Pass the bandage around the paw and back up the dorsal aspect of the limb and hook the bandage around your thumb.

15



Pass the bandage down the dorsal aspect of the limb a second time, but slightly more medially or laterally, ready to wrap the bandage circumferentially around the paw ready to start working up the leg.

The conforming layer is used to secure the bandage. It needs to be tight enough to prevent the bandage from slipping off. However, these bandages are very elastic – do not pull too much when applying them, or they will constrict the paw.

16



Start working the bandage up the leg. Check – is the roll still on top of the bandage?



17



Each layer of bandage should overlap the last layer by about half the width of the bandage.

Continue up the leg.

18



Finish the conforming layer at the same point as the padding layer at the back of the leg. The edge of the conforming layer should be aligned to the padding layer.

# Clinical Skills: Foot Bandage



19 Start applying the cohesive layer. As with previous layers, ensure the roll is on top of the bandage. Start on the dorsal aspect, half way up the bandage. With your thumb, hold the edge of the bandage in place and with your other hand, stretch and release the bandage. This will ensure there is no tension in the bandage.



20 Pass the bandage along the dorsal aspect of the limb, then around the paw and up the ventral aspect of the limb (to about half way up the bandage). Hook the bandage around your fingers and bring the bandage back down the ventral aspect of the limb.



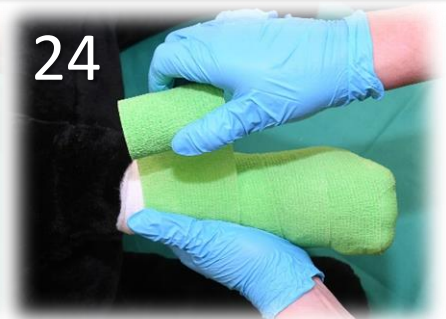
21 Pass the bandage around the paw (remember do not pull the cohesive bandage tightly as it could constrict the paw) and back up the dorsal aspect of the limb. Hook the bandage around your thumb.



22 Pass the bandage down the dorsal aspect a second time, but slightly more medially or laterally, to 'curve' the bandage around the foot and then start working up the leg.



23 Start working the bandage up the leg. Check – is the roll still on top of the bandage? Each layer should overlap the last by about half the width of the bandage.

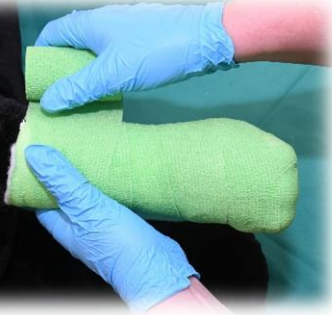


24 Continue.... Remember to keep stretching (pulling off) and releasing the bandage **before** applying it to the animal.

**Important:** Cohesive bandages constrict!! When using these bandages it is VITAL that you stretch the bandage and release it before placing it on the animal. Do not apply it straight from the roll. See the 'Oops' model ('CSL\_B05 Bandaging Oops'), which illustrates what happens when bandages go wrong.

# Clinical Skills: Foot Bandage

25



End the cohesive layer at the same point as the previous two layers. The cohesive layer should also just cover both of the previous two layers at the top of the bandage. The cohesive layer is secured by sticking it to itself.

26



It is important to check the bandage.

1. Feel that it is not too tight around the toes.

27



2. Gently tug the bandage to check that it won't come off easily i.e. when the animal shakes its paw.

28



3. Check the tension around the top of the bandage. You should just be able to get 2 fingers between the animal's skin and the bandage.





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# Resetting the station: Foot Bandage

1. Remove all bandages from the models by unwrapping them; do not cut the bandage off.
2. Re-roll all the bandaging material. It can and will be re-used.
3. Place all the materials, scissors etc. in the tray or box on the table.

*Station ready for the next person:*



Please inform a member of staff if equipment is damaged or about to run out.



# I wish I'd known:

## Foot Bandage

- See the 'Oops' dog station ('CSL\_B05 Bandaging Oops') for examples of what can happen if a bandage is too loose or too tight...
- Many problems can be avoided by thoroughly checking the bandage once you have placed it, and by regularly checking the animal whilst it has the bandage on.
- If an animal nibbles its bandage, don't assume it is just being naughty – it may be a sign of pain or discomfort.
- If taking the dog outside, especially if the weather is wet, remember to cover the foot in a plastic cover (e.g. an old drip bag).