

## Clinical Skills Sheet : Robert Jones bandage

**Task** : Apply a Robert Jones bandage to the patient's left forelimb to stabilise a radial fracture prior to referral and surgical repair.

### Indications for use :

- As a first aid treatment for immobilising limb fractures
- To control limb swelling and oedema
- To provide postoperative limb support

### Method

Select and prepare (unwrap) all the equipment and materials required

- Scissors
- 2.5cm eband™ or zinc oxide tape
- Dressing material (e.g. Melolin™, Zorbopad™, Rondopad™)
- Roll of cotton wool
- Conforming layer (e.g. Knitfix™) – minimum of 3 packets
- Protective outer layer (e.g. Vetwrap™)



Position the patient into lateral recumbency with the affected limb uppermost and ask an assistant to support the affecting limb to facilitate bandaging.

If a wound is present, cover this with a sterile, absorbent, non-adhesive dressing (e.g. Melolin). If applicable, ensure that the shiny side is placed down over the wound.

Apply interdigital padding between the toes using strips of cotton wool. If this is not available, alternative padding material (such as soffban) will suffice.



Stick two lengths of zinc oxide tape to the dorsal and palmer/plantar surfaces or medial and lateral surfaces of the foot to cover 15 – 20cm up the leg and 10 – 15cm overlap at the toes. Stick the two ends together to avoid them adhering to bandage material.



Apply cotton wool to the limb. Start halfway up the nail and wrap it tightly and evenly around the leg and foot. Depending on whether the bandage is applied to a fore or hind limb, either the elbow or stifle joint should be included. A large quantity of cotton wool should be used to support the limb (a minimum of 3 layers).



Apply conforming bandage from distal to proximal limb (do not enclose the toes). The cotton wool should be compressed as firmly and as evenly as possible and the entire layer must be encompassed. A minimum of 2 – 3 layers should be applied to the limb.



Pull the two ends of zinc tape apart, fold each one back and stick to the dorsal and palmer/plantar surfaces or medial and lateral surfaces of the foot. These 'stirrups' will prevent the bandage from slipping.



Apply a layer of cohesive bandage from distal to proximal limb (again, do not enclose the toes).

On completion, the tips of the two middle toes should be visible so that assessment of circulation can be made and to check for signs of inflammation or oedema.



The bandage should be neat and tidy with no bits of cotton wool sticking out.

Check that the bandage is not too tight – it should be possible to insert two fingers between the bandage and the animal.

When flicked, the bandage should sound like a ripe melon

**Question: What alternative methods can be used to immobilise a limb?**

Answer: Splint or in a first aid situation, a ruler or similar.