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How to Apply a Distal Limb Bandage

Supplies you will need:

For your inner bandage to cover a wound:

- Nitrile Gloves
- Sterile Non-Adherent (Telfa) Pad
- Stretch Cling Gauze or Cast Padding

For your outer supportive bandage:

- Sheet Cotton, Redi-Roll, or Gamgee
- 6" Brown Gauze
- VetWrap
- 4" Elastikon
- Bandage Scissors

When applying a distal limb bandage, whether for a wound, limb support, tendon injury, or trailering, keep a few basic principles in mind. Always wrap the different layers of a bandage in the same direction, so that the entire bandage is wrapped consistently. When wrapping any layer, ensure the pressure is applied evenly, and that there are no distinct areas where the bandage cuts into the leg creating pressure points. A bandage with uneven tension and pressure points can potentially cause more harm than good.

1. Before bandaging a wound, be sure it is **clean** and dry. Antiseptic scrubs such as betadine or chlorhexidine should be used, rinsed with saline or clean water. If your veterinarian attends a wound, they will clip and clean the area. When you change the bandage in the future, be sure to keep the wound clean during the change.



2. A **sterile non-adherent pad** should be applied directly over the wound. Take care to keep the pad as clean as possible, as you don't want to contaminate and infect a clean area. Only apply ointments or medications to this pad as directed by your vet.

3. Secure the non-adherent pad to the leg with a **stretch cling gauze** or some **cast padding**.





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4. A **cotton sheet** (redi-roll, BB cotton sheets) is applied next to provide the base padding for the outer bandage. This part of the bandage can often be re-used at a bandage change if it remains clean, dry, and is not soiled from the wound. The top of this layer should stop just below the carpus or below the point of the hock.

5. Leaving 1" of cotton showing at the top and bottom of the bandage, apply **brown gauze** starting at the top and moving down the bandage, then back up. This layer provides support and can be pulled snug; remember to apply even and consistent pressure.



6. Next, apply **VetWrap** over the brown gauze. This layer can also be applied snug, with even and consistent pressure.

7. At the top and the bottom of the bandage, apply a small layer of **Elastikon**. This adheres the bandage to the leg, preventing slipping and keeping shavings and dirt from getting in the bandage.



A bandage should be monitored closely and changed according to your veterinarian's instruction. The bandage should be changed if it slips, becomes wet or soiled, or if drainage from the wound soaks through to the outside of the bandage.