



Post-Operative Care Instructions

Although spays and neuters are common procedures, **please remember that your pet has just gone through surgery and needs appropriate care to properly recover**, including a clean, comfortable, dry place to recover **indoors**.

**IF YOUR PET IS EXPERIENCING ANY PROBLEMS RELATED TO SURGERY
PLEASE CALL THE AFTER CARE LINE AT 715-550-7730 FOR ASSISTANCE.**

Vaccines

- Temporary side-effects of a vaccine may last for up to 2 days after the vaccine: decreased appetite for 1-2 feedings, pain at the injection site, decreased activity, small “lump” and maybe a mild fever.
- If these symptoms persist or progressively worsen or if signs of more intense illness develop, please contact the after care line for assistance. Signs to watch for: facial swelling, hives, vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, collapse, difficulty breathing, injection site swelling.
- **Vaccine sites to monitor:** Rabies – Right hind leg and Distemper combo – Right front shoulder

Anesthesia & Surgery

- Please keep your pet indoors where they can stay clean, dry, and comfortable.
- Your pet may be groggy after you take it home.
- Keep your pet under control, especially near stairs or other potential hazards until it is fully awake and aware.
- Some pets are uncomfortable and irritable after surgery/sedation/anesthesia so it is very important to **prohibit children from hugging or handling the pet** until it is fully aware and comfortable.
- Your pet may have a slight cough for a few days after surgery from the breathing tube used to maintain your pet’s airway during surgery.

Food & Water **Note: Many cats will not eat the night they return home.**

- Whenever anesthesia is used, stomach upset may occur. If your pet should vomit, remove the food and do not feed until the following morning after surgery.
- Approximately half of your pet’s normal serving of food and water should be offered 2 hours after returning home from the clinic.
- If your pet is less than 16 weeks of age, feed him/her approximately half of the normal amount of food & water as soon as you return home. If your puppy will not eat when you return home and if you can, **without risk of being bitten**, rub Karo syrup on the pet’s gums.
- Feed regular diet and amounts the morning after surgery
- Do not change your pet’s diet and do not give junk food table scraps, milk, or any other people food during the recovery period as doing so could mask post-surgical complications.

Activity

- **RESTRICT exercise to on leash only for 10 – 14 days after surgery.** No running, jumping, rowdy play, or swimming. Stairs, if necessary, must be slow and controlled. No jumping on or off furniture. No long walks.
- Too much activity can pull and tear the sutures and cause the surgery site to open or become swollen leading to additional complications that may require additional treatment and expense.
- **High energy dogs should be kenneled and leash walked.**

Incision/Surgery Site

- Check the surgery site once or twice daily to make sure it is healing. Make sure the incision & your pet stay clean & dry. What you see on the day of surgery is considered a normal appearance. Absorbable sutures and medical grade tissue glue were used to close the incision.
- **Do not** apply ointments or other products to the incision site unless instructed to do so by the medical staff.
- **Expect to see** Some mild redness/bruising/swelling at the incision, and minor discomfort. As the wound heals there may be a firm lump under the incision as the absorbable sutures breakdown and absorb.
- **Signs of a problem** Surgery site is very red, green/yellow or reddish discharge, bad odor, has something sticking out from it, is warm to the touch, or has a lump/bump that seems to be growing or is excessively/increasingly painful.
- **MALE CATS:** The surgery site on male cats is very small and does not need closing. It is fine to see 1 or 2 small openings on his scrotum.

Licking the Surgery Site

- **DO NOT** allow your pet to lick at the surgery site as licking at the incision can cause the surgery site to open, become swollen, and cause a painful infection leading to additional expense for you.
- Please keep the E-collar on your pet for 10 days after surgery.

Tattoo

- Your pet has been given a tattoo near the incision site to show proof of spay/neuter.
- For **male cats**, the tattoo is located on the lower abdomen.
- No complications from the tattoo are expected, as sterile instruments are used to create it & closed with medical grade tissue glue. However, please monitor the tattoo site for redness, swelling, or discharge.

Pain Medication

- Your pet has been medicated for pain in conjunction with the spay/neuter surgery. This can last up to 24 hours.
- **DO NOT GIVE HUMAN MEDICATION TO YOUR PET.** It is dangerous and can be fatal.
- If you feel your pet is exceptionally prone to painfulness, you can purchase 2 days of pain medication to take home.

Bathing / Swimming

- **DO NOT** bathe or allow your pet to go swimming for **10 - 14 days** following surgery.
- Incisions that get wet may take longer to heal and increase the chance for potential infection and additional complications.

Keep Your Pet Away From Other Animals

- Keep neutered males away from unspayed females. **Neutered males can get an unspayed female pregnant for up to 30 days after the neuter surgery.**
- Keep spayed females away from intact unneutered males who may wish to mount them. If a male tries to mate the female serious bleeding and trauma may occur, possibly leading to death.
- Animals returning from the clinic after surgery smell different to other animals and this can cause the animals to fight, so be prepared to keep your pets in separate areas for a few days following surgery.

Behavior

- Spaying or neutering can reduce or eliminate certain undesirable behaviors, such as urine marking, mounting, aggression, or spraying, but these behaviors may have already been learned and might not go away completely.
- If these behaviors do go away, they will do so gradually.

Litter Box Habits

- Litter dust can get into the surgery site of male cats and cause an infection. Shredded paper (Yesterday's New can be purchased at pet stores) or uncooked, long-grain rice should be used in the litter box for at least a week after surgery.
- Make sure the litter box is clean.

Hiding:

- Cats may hide after surgery. Block access to all places where your cat could hide so you can monitor the healing process.
- Helping your cat feel safe and comfortable is important to the recovery process.
- Place your cat in a quiet dark confined area such as a bathroom with the lights off.

Recognizing Potential Problems

Spaying and neutering are very safe surgeries; however, complications can occur. Minimal redness and swelling should resolve within several days. If it persists longer, please contact us. **Please contact us immediately if you notice any of the following within 48 hours.** After 48 hours some of these problems maybe related to a virus.

- pale gums
- depression
- persistent vomiting (more than 24 hours after surgery)
- diarrhea
- abnormal discharge or bleeding from the incision
- difficulty urinating
- labored breathing
- not eating or lethargic for more than 24 hours
- tearing of the sutures & incision opening

Prior to seeking veterinary care for a post-operative complication, you must contact the after care line. **Please note: we cannot be held responsible for complications resulting from a failure to follow post-op instructions or for contagious diseases that the animal was exposed to while at the mobile clinic site.** Your regular veterinarian must address any illnesses or injuries that are not a direct result of surgery. Please call for instructions as soon as you see cause for concern.

If your pet is experiencing problems directly related to the surgery call 715-550-7730.