

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

SPAY & NEUTER



INCISION CARE: A mild amount of redness, bruising, swelling or blood-tinged discharge is normal during the first few days of recovery.

- No suture removal necessary. **ABSORBABLE** sutures were placed and will dissolve over time
- Do not bathe your pet during the recovery period (10-14 days)
- Keep pets indoors so they can stay clean, dry, and warm
- **Do not clean or apply anything to the incision unless instructed by the veterinary team.**
- Monitor your pet's incision closely at least 7-10 days. When looking at the incision, be sure to note the color of the skin at the incision line, the amount of swelling, and if there is any clear or colored discharge (oozing of fluid).
- Take a photo of the incision on the first day home so you can compare objectively in the future by looking back at the original photo for comparison.
- **Color:** The incision edges, the skin may be pink to light red initially. Fading back to the normal skin color will happen over time. Initial bruising is light red and will change to differing shades of dark purple and yellow as it heals.
- **Swelling:** Mild swelling can be expected at an incision site immediately postoperatively. If the swelling gets worse, please contact us.
- **Discharge:** A small amount of light red incisional discharge is expected. Increased discharge or discharge that is dark red, yellow, white, green, or smells bad requires an immediate recheck – either with us or an emergency hospital if it is after hours.
- **SCROTAL NEUTERS** are left open to drain [or may contain 1-stitch]. Heal is by second intention [close up naturally]. Scrotal incisions help minimize the chance of fluid accumulation (blood or serum) within the scrotal sac - which can be painful and require medical intervention. It is not uncommon to see occasional [bloody] drainage / dripping / spotting or noticing a “gap” (small opening) in the incision.

PREVENT LICKING/SCRATCHING: An E-Collar and/or a surgical recovery suit must be worn for the next 7-14 days.

ACTIVITY

- Limit exercise/play/activity with pets or people while your pet recovers (usually 10-14 days).
- Limited leash walks are ok - keep the walks short and controlled over the first 2 weeks.
- **SEDATIVES** can be very helpful to keep your pet calm. If you would like sedatives provided, please ask. Supervise your pet while outdoors, and it may be helpful to your pet on a leash.

FOOD/WATER

- Your pet can have normal access to water.
- To avoid nausea, feed 1/2 of your pet's normal amount and type of food after coming home and your pet has settled.
- A slight decrease in appetite may occur, but normal food intake should return within 24-36 hours after returning home.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some of the more common, yet normal post procedure behaviors and potential complications of anesthesia are:

- **COUGHING.** Your pet was placed under general anesthesia – a series of injectable medications and an anesthetic gas was used. An endotracheal tube (ET) was placed in your pets' trachea (windpipe) and they

were maintained on anesthetic gas during the procedure. Use of an ET tube may cause some minor irritation to the throat. It is not uncommon for the pet to experience some mild coughing for the next couple of days. If you feel that the coughing is severe or does not resolve on its own, please reach out to the hospital.

- **LETHARGY/VOCALIZING.** Your pet may be tired and slightly disoriented once home from the procedure – please plan accordingly for navigation into/out of vehicles and around stairs, etc. Your pet may also vocalize, (whining/whimpering/groaning/howling), as a result of the medications used during anesthesia and for pain management afterward. These are considered normal behaviors however, if you are concerned your pet is in pain or uncomfortable, please contact the hospital.
- **ELIMINATIONS.** It is not uncommon for a pet to not have a bowel movement for the first few days following anesthesia. Anesthetic agents and pain medications used will often cause the motility and transit time of the intestines to slow down. As long as your pet is comfortable and not showing signs of distress - **let nature "take its course"**. If your pet is actively trying to have a bowel movement and cannot pass stool, please call the hospital.

OTHER POSTOPERATIVE COMPLICATIONS - SPAY | NEUTER

- [Ovarian Remnant Syndrome](#) - females
- [Urinary Incontinence](#) - usually females
- Scrotal hematoma - males
- Hormonal changes - males & females - increased risk of weight gain/obesity

CALL OR SEEK VETERINARY CARE IF

- The incision has signs of excessive redness, swelling, bruising, discharge (dripping or malodorous fluid), and if any sutures are missing.
- Seems agitated or uncomfortable for more than 2 hours
- Has [difficulty breathing, orthopnea](#) or cannot settle down
- Begins squinting the eye(s) for more than 1 hour at a time.
- Begins bumping into objects acting non-visual
- Develops any [new] wounds or [large bruises](#) on the body
- Refuses to eat or drink for more than 12 hours.
- Does not defecate for more than 3 days.
- Has diarrhea for more than 24-36 hours.
- Vomits more than 3 times in 12 hours.
- Seems weak, listless, has difficulty getting up or walking.
- Has a rectal **temperature >102.5-103F** for >12 hrs
- The incision has a foul smell

Discharge Video Instructions

Be sure to read [Surgical Discharge Instructions for Pets](#) or [Post Operative Care for Pets](#) for more detailed information on how to take care of your pet after anesthesia & surgery. You may also find the following ASPCA video instructions on surgical recovery [spay/neuter/abdominal procedures] helpful:

[ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance: After Surgery - YouTube](#) (1:44 min)

[Spay/Neuter Clinic Flow: Post-op Instructions for Clinics - YouTube](#) (4.20 min)

[Ask a Vet: All You Need to Know About Spay/Neuter Surgery • MSPCA-Angell](#)

[Spay/neuter post-surgical care and recovery instructions | Animal Humane Society](#)

[Spay - Ovariohysterectomy](#)

[Spay - Ovariectomy](#)

[Castration - \[Scrotal\] Neuter](#)