Spay & Neuter Aftercare Instructions

We employ licensed veterinarians with years of experience, support their work with competent caring staff who love animals and maintain the highest quality of care. Remember, if you have any questions or concerns, please call us immediately. Over the years, we have learned to do the following to promote a fast and safe recovery.

Your pet is recovering from major surgery and anesthesia. The best thing you can do for your pet is provide a warm, dry, calm and safe place to recover. Take your pet home to relax for at least an hour. Your pet may hide, be sociable, be active or just wander around. Within reason, this is normal and acceptable. Leash walk your dog.

Food and Water

- Wait one hour after returning home; then offer a tiny portion of food and water. If your pet eats and no vomiting occurs; then after half an hour offer another tiny portion of food and water. About a half hour after this, give your pet a water bowl.

- Resume normal feedings on the day after surgery. Appetite should return gradually within 24 hours of surgery. Lethargy lasting for more than 24 hours post-op, diarrhea or vomiting are not normal and you should call us.

- Do not change your pet’s diet at this time and do not give junk food, table scraps, milk or other people food during the recovery period. This could mask post-surgical complications.

Pain Medicine

We give every surgical patient pain medicine, which lasts for 24 hours. This is sufficient for most pets however; some pets are more susceptible to pain. If you accepted the extra pain medicine for your pet, then give the medicine as instructed.

If you need pain medicine, call the clinic but do not give your pet over-the-counter products such as aspirin which can be fatal to pets.

Protective Collar (E-Collar)

- Do not allow your pet to lick or chew at the incision. If this occurs, an Elizabethan collar MUST be applied to prevent it. E-collars are available from us or from pet stores.

- It can be very expensive to repair the damage pets do to themselves when licking or chewing on their incision. Your pet can chew open their incision or cause infection because saliva causes infections.

- Keep the e-collar on your pet for 14 days.

Cat Litter

- Cats are creatures of habit and many do not like change so, unless your cat was declawed, do not change the type of or brand of litter you use for 2 weeks.

Activity and Exercise

The good news is that your pet received excellent pain medicine and shouldn’t be in pain. The bad news is that your pet received excellent pain medicine, is not in pain and sees no reason to restrict his or her behavior. So preventing too much activity is your job.

- No running, jumping or excessive stair climbing for 14 days.

- Leash walk your dog for two weeks.

If your male is too active, his scrotum may fill with serum or it could drip blood. Fortunately, most of the time this is not life threatening but is not so good for the carpets and upholstery either.
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If your female is too active, she could tug on the incision and it will come open about the width of two quarters held side by side. If this happens, call us.

**Incisions and Sutures**
- Examine area daily for swelling, redness and missing sutures.
- You may find swelling or hardness over the incision. This is a normal reaction to dissolvable sutures and will go away in about 2 weeks.
- No suture removal is needed. The edge of the very top layer of skin is held in place with surgical glue. This glue will flake off in a few days and in some cases the skin will open about an 1/8” of an inch. If this happens, gently clean the incision twice a day with hydrogen peroxide.
- Keep incision dry; no baths, although sponge baths are acceptable as long as sutures are not soaked.

**Vaccinations**
- We use the same quality vaccinations used in other veterinary practices. Vaccinations are generally safe and effective but no drug is perfect so no drug for pets or people works 100% of the time without any complications.
- This means that most pets vaccinated according to the manufacturer's recommendations receive effective protection from disease but some do not. It also means that most pets will not have any reaction to the vaccination but some do and these complications can rarely be serious or result in death.
- Like when people are vaccinated, the most likely complications are localized soreness or lethargy for 24 hours.
- Vaccinations are an aid to the prevention of disease. The manufacturer designed the vaccinations to trigger your pet’s immune system to develop a reaction to the components of the vaccination to cause immunity to the diseases. Vaccine manufacturers recommend and your pet may require a series of vaccinations to develop immunity and any immunity developed will likely diminish with time. So the manufacturers establish schedules for revaccination to maintain protection. Also, kittens and puppies require more frequent vaccinations than adult pets.
- We recommend you complete a vaccination program and revaccinate your pet annually.

**Questions, complications, emergencies,**
- We do thousands of surgeries and virtually everyone recovers without any problem but call us immediately if you have any concerns.
- If you have any questions or concerns related to the surgery, vaccinations or any treatment we administered, call 440-934-5353 during business hours. If there is an emergency after hours, call 440-522-6559.
- We will treat, at our clinic during normal business hours, at minimal cost, any post-op complications resulting directly from the surgery, if our post op instructions are followed in full.
- It is the owner’s responsibility to properly follow the post op instructions, to vaccinate your pet against contagious diseases prior to surgery and to protect your pet by using effective parasite control.

**Recap**
- We expect your pet to eat and drink, pee and poop within 24 hours of the surgery.
- Some pets vomit once or twice. If after 24 hours your pet is lethargic, is not eating, is not eliminating, has diarrhea or vomits more than once or twice, call us immediately.
- Keep your pet from being too active and only leash walk your dog for two weeks.
- Check the incision area daily.
- Call us immediately if you have questions or concerns.
- Keep the e-collar on your pet for 14 days.