

Post-Operative Care & Nursing Instructions

Your pet has had an operation that requires and deserves proper care and observation for the next several days. How well and how quickly your pet recovers from surgery depends on the quality of care you provide. The following is some information to help with aftercare.

- **Convalescence:**
 - Your pet may or may not be sleepy when you pick them up (this sleepiness will vary with each animal depending on condition, temperament, and obesity). It is the result primarily of the tranquilizer administered prior to general anesthesia. Keep your pet in a warm, dry, quiet place away from all other animals and children for at least the next 24 hours.
- **Feeding:**
 - We suggest on the first night only limited, small amounts of water be given when you take your pet home. After about 8 pm you may offer a small amount of food. It is not uncommon for pets to not eat and post anesthetic vomiting is common on the first night. Resume normal feeding the next day.
- **Abscesses:**
 - An abscess is an infection that produces pus within a wound, usually the result of a puncture wound (i.e. bite or claw wounds). These wounds must be drained of pus and not allowed to close up until the infection has been eliminated. One or more rubber drains are usually put into the wound in order to allow for drainage of infection and debris. To encourage healing and draining, you may hot pack the area for 5-10 minutes several times a day. Drains should be removed in 3-5 days unless otherwise specified.
- **Suture Removal:**
 - Routine spays and neuters do not require suture removal unless otherwise instructed at time of discharge. Pets that do require sutures should have them removed 10-14 days after surgery unless otherwise noted. No appointment is necessary for suture removal.
- **Neuters:**
 - An incision was made just in front of the scrotum and the testicles were removed. The blood vessels supplying the testicles and other tissues were then tied off to prevent excessive bleeding. Many male dogs will lick their incision after the neuter because it is located in an area that male dogs routinely lick anyway. We strongly recommend a restraint collar (E-Collar) post-operative for neutered dogs. Excessive licking can open an incision very quickly and may cause an infection.
- **Spays:**
 - An incision was made through the skin and abdominal wall into the abdominal cavity and both ovaries and the uterus were removed. This procedure is called an ovariohysterectomy. The incision should be observed daily. A small amount of redness and swelling is normal. Any discharge, such as serum or blood, or excessive large swelling should be reported to the clinic. Female dogs lick at their incision site less

frequently due to the incision being located in an area that is not routinely licked. While we observe all patients post-operative for the occurrence of licking at their incision, it is our ultimate responsibility, as the pet owner, to watch for excessive licking once your pet is released into your care. If you feel your pet may lick, or observe your pet licking at the incision, we strongly recommend you obtain a restraint collar as soon as possible. Incisions can open and or become infected very quickly once a pet starts licking excessively.

What to look for:

- Excessive licking, excessive swelling, lack of appetite, or vomiting after the first day, listlessness are symptoms of concern and should they occur please contact our office or bring your pet in. Male dogs may experience some swelling of the scrotum following the 3rd or 4th day of surgery. If this occurs, the application of warm packs for 5-10 minutes, several times daily will be beneficial.

Convalescence:

In addition to the previous instructions for convalescence, after a spay or neuter your pet should be kept indoors with limited activity for the next 10-14 days. Dogs should be taken out on a leash during this time.

If your pet was in heat at the time of surgery, she should be kept away from males for the next 2 weeks. She will retain the odor which attracts males and may still be receptive to them. If a male tries to mate with her, there is a risk this may rupture her internal sutures and cause internal bleeding.

If your pet was pregnant at the time of surgery she will take longer to recuperate from surgery. She will probably be slightly anemic and little more lethargic. To help her recover as quickly as possible, please allow her access to plenty of fresh, clean drinking water and feed her a high quality pet food.

We anticipate your pet will have a normal, uneventful recover. If you have any questions regarding <his> progress, please call our office. If it is after our normal business hours, please contact your local animal emergency clinic. Our Renton location is also open on Sundays, and their phone number is 425-255-5678. We appreciate your business and look forward to serving you in the future.