



NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SPAY & NEUTER CENTER

Post-Operative Discharge Instructions

The two complications you are trying to prevent during your pet's recovery from surgery are tearing of the sutures and infection at the surgical site. The external incision is closed with a surgical skin glue which will dissolve over time. The internal sutures will dissolve on their own over the next six months; during this time you may be able to feel a series of small lumps or knots under the skin at the surgery site. This is normal.

Please follow these instructions to ensure your pet has a smooth and rapid recovery:

- **Inactivity – Restrict your pet's activity during the post-op recovery period.** No running, jumping, playing, or other strenuous activity for the next 7-10 days. Dogs should be taken out to relieve themselves on short leash walks only. If your pet is too active, confine him or her to a smaller area, such as a bathroom. Dogs should be crated if necessary to restrict activity.
- **Incision Site Care –**
 - Keep the incision dry. No swimming or baths for 10 days.
 - **Dogs:** All dogs must wear an e-collar for 7-10 days after the surgery to prevent licking / chewing at the incision.
 - **Cats:** While many cats do fine without an e-collar, some female cats do end up needing to wear one, as some will obsessively lick or chew at their incisions (more than normal grooming). For female cats it may be advisable to purchase an e-collar in advance so if your cat does end up needing one you will already have it on hand. Male cats rarely need to wear an e-collar post-op, as their incisions are so small that they tend not to bother the incisions.
 - **Check the incision site at least twice a day for 10 days.** Look for redness, swelling, or drainage (anything oozing from the incision). If you see any of these, it generally means your pet is being too active or is licking/chewing at the incision and may be developing an infection. Restrict your pet's activity as much as possible and, for dogs, make sure he or she has a properly-fitted e-collar, to prevent further irritation of the surgical site. If you see excessive redness, swelling, or discharge at the incision site please contact us to schedule a recheck appointment.*

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Eating – You may offer your pet a small meal tonight, about 1/3 the amount of a normal meal, and return to regular feedings tomorrow. Your pet may be lethargic and/or inappetent for 24-48 hours after the surgery. Pets react differently to surgery and anesthesia; some recover more slowly than others. If your pet does not want to eat tonight that is ok (just like humans some animals will feel queasy for the rest of the day following anesthesia) however, if your pet's appetite does not return after 24-48 hrs please contact us to schedule a re-check appointment, as this could be a sign of a complication.*

Pain Medication – The injection of pain medication your pet received for the surgery should last until the next morning. The morning after surgery is when you will begin to give your pet the pain medication provided (in pill form), twice a day for 3 days (as directed on the package).

***Re-check appointments** – To schedule a re-check appointment please call Sara Spendelow, Office Manager, at (202) 608-1356 x103 Monday-Thursday. In most cases post-op complications are not an emergency and can wait until the next business day to be checked. The National Capital Area Spay & Neuter Center is only open Monday through Thursday, and from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays (during the vaccine clinic). We are closed on Fridays and Sundays. While most post-op complications can wait until the next business day, if you feel your pet needs urgent medical attention when the Center is closed, you must take him or her to a veterinarian or, if necessary (especially in cases of bleeding, fever, or extreme lethargy), to an animal emergency clinic. Note: The Center does not treat non-surgical related health issues. Surgery itself can stress the immune system and cause manifestation of pre-existing problems and/or transmission of contagious diseases. It is the pet owner's responsibility to ensure that pets are fully vaccinated against distemper and rabies prior to surgery.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your pet's surgery, please call Sara Spendelow, Office Manger, at (202)-608-1356 x103 (Monday to Thursday only).

How was your experience with us today? The Washington Humane Society's National Capital Area Spay & Neuter Center strives to provide you and your pet with the highest quality service at an affordable price. Please take a moment to visit our "Yelp" page at <http://www.yelp.com/biz/national-capital-area-spay-and-neuter-center-washington> to give us a review and let us know how we did!