

Post-Operative Care Instructions

Read the following carefully before picking up your pet. If you have questions, you may ask the veterinary staff at pick-up.

To avoid a \$25 late fee, please call 757-546-5355 if you will be late.



1. **Keep pets indoors, warm and quiet, after surgery.** This will allow you to monitor your pet and prevents complications from activity or exposure to extreme temperatures.
2. **Restrict the amount of food and water your pet has in the first few hours at home.** Provide $\frac{1}{4}$ of your pet's normal amount of food and enough water to cover the bottom of a water dish.
 - **Toy breeds and pets 4 months of age or less:** Give a small meal and water upon arriving home. If vomiting occurs, pull up food and offer again in the morning.
 - **Rabbits:** Provide access to normal diet and water immediately before and after surgery. Ensure your rabbit is eating, drinking, and producing fecal pellets normally after arriving home. If your rabbit is not eating/drinking or develops diarrhea, take the pet to an exotic pet veterinarian for an exam immediately.
3. **Restrict your pet's activity for the next 10 days.** Dogs should be leash walked and only allowed out to urinate/defecate. Do not allow running, jumping, or vigorous play. Too much activity causes swelling and bruising of the incision or surrounding area and may cause internal bleeding.
4. **Check the incision at least twice daily until healed.** Slight swelling and redness is normal. Contact your veterinarian immediately if you notice continued drainage, swelling, excessive redness, or opening of the incision. Do not apply any topical medications or cover the incision unless directed to do so by a veterinarian.
5. **Keep the incision dry for 10 days after surgery.** Your pet's sutures are dissolvable. Sutures do not require removal unless specifically indicated. Do not allow your pet to lick the incision. No bathing, swimming, or extended exposure to wet weather is allowed until the incision is healed.
6. **DO NOT give any type of human pain reliever, especially Aspirin or Tylenol, to your pet.** These are toxic to pets and can cause death.
7. **Give prescribed medications as instructed starting the next morning.** Your pet receives an injection for pain that lasts for 24 hours after surgery. If you feel your pet needs additional pain medication, see your primary care veterinarian.
 - **Cats:** All cats receive a slow-release injection for pain following surgery. This injection provides pain relief for 72 hours. No other pain medication is needed for cats.

Your pet may experience the following harmless items in the first 24 hours after surgery:

1. Shaking, whimpering, or extreme tiredness from the stress of surgery and the remaining drugs in their system. It should subside in less than a day – just keep your pet warm and comfortable.
2. Redness, swelling, or very slight oozing of the incision. Restrict pet's activity and use the E-collar.
3. Cough, hoarse bark, or hoarse meow from the tube inserted in the pet's throat to administer anesthesia. If coughing and sneezing lasts more than a few days, call your veterinarian.
4. Lack of urination/defecation. Your pet hasn't had much to eat or drink in 12 hours. Normal body functions should resume by the next morning.

In the next few weeks, you may notice:

1. A firm lump or raised area at the incision site, typically from a reaction to the suture. Please call us or see your veterinarian if the lump remains for more than 2-3 weeks.
2. Red or irritated incision. This is usually caused by licking. To avoid infections caused by licking, use the E-collar as instructed. If you are concerned about the incision site, call your veterinarian.

EMERGENCIES

Pets displaying these signs must be taken to an emergency vet at once.

Continuous bleeding, continuous vomiting (multiple times an hour for more than 2 hours), bloating of the abdomen, extreme pain, pale gums, seizures, completely unresponsive pet (as if in a coma)