

Spay/Neuter After Care Instructions

Your pet has undergone anesthesia and surgery; they will be drowsy and somewhat uncoordinated this evening. Your pet should be kept strictly confined to a small area for the first 12-24 hours after their procedure to prevent falls due to disorientation.

Dogs should be placed in a crate or a small room like a bedroom or bathroom overnight. Vocalization (whining, crying, howling) is common after surgery; it is a symptom of the disorientation caused by the anesthetic medications. Feed half of a normal meal at 8pm along with a small amount of water. Your dog may not be interested in food tonight, which is normal. Normal feeding routines can resume in the morning.

Cats should be kept in their crates for at least 2-4 hours following arrival back to your home, and then confined to a small area (bathroom, large dog crate) for 7-10 days. Cats may be slightly frantic; this is a symptom of the disorientation caused by the anesthetic medications. Please keep them crated in a quiet, dark place until they have calmed. Feed a small amount of soft food (~2-4 TBSP) at 8pm along with a small amount of water. Your cat may not be interested in food tonight, which is normal. Normal feeding routines can resume in the morning.

Pain Medication:

Your pet has received post-operative pain medication. ALL CATS have received an injection of long-acting 3-day pain control. Dogs go home with oral pain medication. Please follow the instructions provided with their medication.

Danger signs:

If your pet is exhibiting any of the following symptoms, please immediately follow up with us during our regular business hours (Monday through Thursday 7am-4pm), or with your full-service vet or emergency vet after hours:

- Extreme lethargy/depression
- Pale gums
- Persistent bleeding or drainage from incision

What to Expect and Look For:

Restricted activity is crucial! No fetching, playing, jumping/leaping or running loose in the house or yard. Confine to the smallest room possible or keep crated for 7-10 days. Keep separated from all other pets. All dogs should be leash walked ONLY. The more the incision moves, the longer healing takes and the greater the chances for infection.

Licking is bad! Any pet licking its incision for any span of time needs an e-collar (cone) to prevent infection. Pets quickly learn to lick when no one is watching. If the glue has disappeared and the outline of the incision is bright red and/or moist, your pet is likely licking and a cone is recommended. Cones are available here or any vet or pet supply facility. If your pet has an e-collar (cone), please keep it on your pet at all times during the 10-day healing process unless otherwise instructed. If your pet refuses to eat/drink with the cone on, it may be removed during supervised meals and then immediately put back on after eating/drinking.

24-72 Hours After Surgery:

The incision will have minimal swelling within this time frame. Some bruising is expected, especially for our females in-heat and larger dogs. If your dog is hyperactive, please contact us about the need for

sedation and we can prescribe it.

Female incisions will have a folded appearance with a blue-green glue present. The folded skin is to provide extra protection in case licking starts. Females in-heat should be kept away from males for 2 weeks, with no time unsupervised and leash walks only. Recently spayed in-heat females are still smell receptive to males and any male who tries to breed with her can damage her internal sutures.

Male scrotal incisions are open at the skin level unless they are pediatric (immature scrotum) or if the surgeon elected to do a pre-scrotal incision (usually for large mature scrotums). Pediatrics and pre-scrotals will have a glued incision. Male *scrotal incision* dogs will have some oozing of bloody serum as well as a small amount of swelling. To reduce oozing, restrict activity and keep from licking.

Appetite and energy levels should be back to normal within 24 hours. Your pet should not have any vomiting or diarrhea. A mild cough is expected from the placement of the breathing tube. Any active (dripping) bleeding needs to be re-evaluated by the surgeon. Call us for a follow up.

Cats may have mild behavior changes from the pain medication. Common symptoms are opposite behavior (ex: shy cats become friendly), over friendliness, mild unsteadiness, and talkative behavior.

4-7 Days After Surgery:

Continue to restrict your pet's activity. Damage can still happen, even with partial healing. If your pet has been overactive, significant swelling or a hard knot will form on the incision. This is evidence of the body reacting to the movement of the sutures. If this occurs, we recommend a follow-up exam to rule out infection.

Any cough should have resolved. If not, we recommend a follow-up exam.

Male dogs should be done with any oozing at this point. Swelling should be minimal. If it looks like they never had surgery (scrotum is swollen and looks like there are testicles present), please return for a follow-up exam.

7-10 Days After Surgery:

Congratulations! You made it! Your pet's incision should look mostly healed with no ooze and minimal swelling. Take the next few days to gradually work them back up to their normal activity level. If their incision is swollen, red, and/or oozing, please return for a follow-up exam. Your pet's incision may be infected.

Post-operative recheck exams are available at our clinic AT NO CHARGE. Charges will apply for cones or medications if needed. Please call us at **434-207-2106** or email us with details and photos at spayneuter@lynchburghumane.org if you have a concern. We are happy to see our patients post surgery. We are open Monday through Thursday 7am – 4pm. For after-hours concerns, contact your full-service vet or the Animal Emergency and Critical Care Clinic on Oddfellows Road in Lynchburg: 434-846-1504.

Thank you for trusting your pet with us.

The Doctors and Staff of Lynchburg Humane Society's Spay/Neuter Clinic