

SPAY/NEUTER VETERINARY CLINIC OF THE SANDHILLS

The Community Solution to Animal Overpopulation



What to Expect After Surgery

Your pet has just undergone a major surgery and you may notice a few temporary changes. These changes can include your pet being groggy or sleepy for up to 24 hours after surgery. This is a normal side effect of anesthesia and it is important that you keep your animal confined to a small quiet area away from other animals or children where they can peacefully rest while they recover. Animals can also appear clumsy and uncoordinated so it's a good idea helping them in and out of the car on the way home so that they don't accidentally damage their surgery site. Avoiding stairs or elevated surfaces is recommended as well to prevent animals from falling and injuring themselves.

Often animals are not hungry after surgery, even though they have been fasted. It may take 12-24 hours for full appetite to return. You can offer their regular diet or a bland diet of boiled chicken and rice to encourage eating.

Remember to Monitor and Protect Your Pets Incision Site!

This is something that is easily done and can help ensure your pet has a safe and uneventful recovery. Unless told otherwise, your pet will not have any external sutures, and neutered male cats will not have any sutures at all. Your pet's incision was also surgically glued to add an extra level of protection and security to their incision site. If your animal was pregnant at the time of surgery or the incision was larger than normal, you may also notice some staples along the incision. These add yet another layer of security and will need to be removed 10-14 days after surgery as these will not dissolve on their own.

You will notice that we have tattooed a very small line on their abdomen to indicate to others that they have already been spayed or neutered (male cats do not receive a tattoo).

We will show you your dog's incision site before you go home. For cats, we do not want to take them out of their cages in the lobby due to stress, so please check the incision when you get home. At this time the site will appear as what we would call "normal." It's a good idea to look at your pet's incision at least twice a day for the first two weeks to ensure the skin is healing properly. Protecting this area is of the utmost importance. Preventing your animal, or others, from chewing or licking at the site is essential to allow proper healing. This can be done by placing an Elizabethan collar and isolating your pet from other animals and children for a couple weeks after surgery.

Keeping the area of the incision clean and dry is vital to preventing infection. We recommend that you keep your animal indoors while recovering except to use the bathroom. Even allowing your animal to walk through tall wet grass outside can put them at increased risk for infection.

Spay/Neuter Veterinary Clinic of the Sandhills, 5071 US Hwy #1 N Unit C,
Vass, North Carolina 28394

Phone: (910) 692-FIXX (3499) Fax: (910) 692-9650

www.SpayNeuterVet.org

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NEVER CLEAN THE INCISION WITH ANY LIQUIDS, ESPECIALLY HYDROGEN PEROXIDE. THIS WILL ABSORB THE SUTURES PREMATURELY AND CAUSE THE INCISION TO OPEN. Do not apply any ointments or creams to the incision as it will also cause the sutures to absorb prematurely. **NEVER COVER THE INCISION WITH A BAND-AID OR BANDAGE.** This will irritate the skin and cause bacteria and moisture to be trapped against the incision, absorbing the sutures prematurely.

It is critical to prevent your pet from running or jumping during the first 10 days after surgery. Limiting activity will help prevent unwanted complications such as inflammation, incision pulling open, bleeding, or development of fluid pockets in the tissues. Dogs should only be allowed outside on a leash to limit activity.

If your pet is a cat, it received a pain injection that lasts three days. If your pet is a dog, it has been sent home with pain medication that should control any inflammation or discomfort from surgery. **DO NOT ADMINISTER ANY ADDITIONAL OVER THE COUNTER OR PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATION TO YOUR PET. DOING SO CAN CAUSE GI ISSUES, ORGAN FAILURE OR DEATH.**

When to be Concerned and to Call a Veterinarian

If you feel that your pet is not healing appropriately or notice any of the signs listed below, your pet may be having a postsurgical complication. Please contact us as soon as possible at (910) 692-3499 option 3. We are open Monday – Thursday and see rechecks at 9am and 3pm on those days. There is not normally a charge for recheck exams if your pet does not need sedation and minimal charge for medications if needed. If it is after hours, still give us a call and we will give you advice over the phone. If you are not able to reach us, do not receive a call back or you feel your pet's life is at risk call the Vass Small Animal Emergency Clinic at (910) 246-0405 or your regular veterinarian immediately.

- Depressed attitude
- Difficulty Breathing
- Pale gums
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty urinating
- Decreased appetite for more than 24 hours after surgery
- Lethargy for more than 24 hours after surgery
- Excessive heat, swelling, redness, pain or discharge coming from the incision
- Cough lasting for more than 3 days after surgery

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