



Aftercare Instructions for Spay or Neuter Surgery

Please review the following information to care for your pet after spay or neuter surgery.

RECOVERY TONIGHT

- Your pet received general anesthesia and morphine-type pain medications today.
- Please let your pet recover tonight in a safe, warm, quiet place away from stairs, children or other pets.
- You may observe drowsiness, shivering or trembling, whimpering or whining, and nausea for the next 12 hours.
- Some cats may have dilated pupils or “glassy” eyes.
- Your pet should be feeling and acting normally by tomorrow morning.

FOOD

- Offer a small meal tonight.
- Do not be alarmed if your pet is not interested in food this evening; nausea is common after anesthesia.
- Your pet should be eating and drinking normally by tomorrow morning.

INCISION CARE

- The incision must remain clean and dry for 7 days.
- Licking and chewing will lead to pain, infection, and failure of the stitches.
 - o Your pet must wear an e-collar at all times for the next 7 days.
 - o Do not allow other pets in the household to chew or lick the incision.
- Inspect the incision in the morning and evening. Look for redness, swelling, discharge, bad odor, or opening.
- No swimming or bathing for 7 days – do not soak the incision when bathing.
- Your pet’s stitches are under the skin and will dissolve; they do not need to be removed.

ACTIVITY

- Limited activity is critical to allow healing after surgery.

DOGS

- Short walks on-leash only for 7 days.
- No running, jumping or rough-housing. No playing with toys, no chasing the ball.
- If your pet is too active, we can prescribe a sedative medication for the healing period.

CATS

- Limit activity for 7 days. No playing with toys or rough-housing.
- Females: If possible, keep your female cat indoors for the next 7 days.
- Males: Use shredded newspaper or paper towels instead of cat litter for 24 hours.

MEDICATIONS

- In some cases, we will prescribe a pain medication to give at home.
- *If your pet has a medication, please give the first dose at home tomorrow morning and give with food.*
- Discontinue the medication(s) and contact us if your pet has vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- The SF SPCA will provide care for any problems directly related to the surgery at no cost to you.
- Complications caused by failure to comply with discharge instructions will not be covered. This includes failure to use the e-collar provided or replacement with a “donut” style collar or “surgery suit”.
- Please note that we are unable to reimburse costs incurred at other veterinary hospitals. If you choose to seek veterinary care at any facility other than the SF SPCA, all financial responsibility will be solely yours.

Please review the reverse side for information about what to do if you are concerned about your pet after surgery.

Continued Aftercare Instructions for Spay or Neuter Surgery

WHAT IS NORMAL AND EXPECTED AFTER SURGERY?

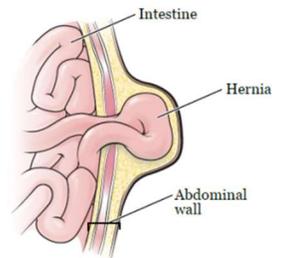
The following are expected in some patients after surgery. These conditions should be monitored closely but generally do not need to be evaluated by a veterinarian.

- Mild redness, bruising, or swelling around the incision. These should resolve in 5-7 days.
- Mild redness or irritation of the shaved skin. This can be caused by shaving and should resolve in 3-5 days.
- A small, firm bump under the incision that is not red, painful, or warm to the touch. This can be the result of a minor reaction to the stitches and should resolve in 7-14 days as the stitches dissolve.
- Your pet may not defecate for 24 hrs.

WHAT IS NOT NORMAL?

The following are not expected after surgery and should be evaluated by a veterinarian. If you observe any of these complications, please contact us at 415-554-3030.

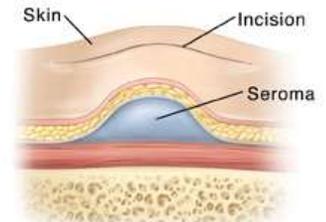
- Redness, warmth to the touch, and/or pain of the incision more than 24 hours after surgery.
- Swelling of the incision that comes and goes, or flattens out when your pet moves into different positions. This could be a sign of a hernia and must be addressed as soon as possible.
- Discharge, odor, or opening of the incision.
- Any signs of illness including vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, pale gums, unsteady gait, difficulty urinating or defecating, or labored breathing.



A possible **hernia** should be evaluated by a veterinarian.

WHAT IS A SEROMA?

- A seroma is a build-up of fluid between the muscles and the skin under an incision.
- This common complication occurs as a result of too much activity.
- A seroma will generally resolve on its own without treatment within 7 to 10 days.
- Swelling that is not painful, is not red, is not hot to the touch, and does not go away when you apply gentle pressure *may* be a seroma.
- If your pet has a seroma, restrict his or her activity and use sedative medications as prescribed. If tolerated, apply a warm compress to the area for 5-10 minutes, 2-3 times per day.



A **seroma** is caused by too much activity after surgery.

HOW TO CONTACT US

- Non-urgent questions and concerns:
 - o Email: spayneuterfrontdesk@sfpca.org
 - o **Call 415-554-3030** during regular business hours (8am to 6pm, 7 days per week)
- Urgent concerns or life-threatening emergencies:
 - o 8 am to 6pm: **Call 415-554-3030**. You may be directed to the Spay/Neuter Clinic or Mission Campus hospital.
 - o 6pm to 12am: **Call 415-554-3030**. You may be directed to the Pacific Heights Campus hospital.
 - o After 10pm: Go directly to our Pacific Heights Campus at 2343 Fillmore Street.

*Thank you for entrusting us with your pet's care.
Please review the reverse side for general aftercare instructions.*