

How To Care For Your Female Cat After Surgery

The Surgery

Spaying a female cat is considered a major surgery. The surgery requires general anesthesia, the patient is completely asleep and unable to move or feel anything. The abdominal wall is opened and the ovaries and uterus are removed. After removing the ovaries and uterus, the cat is unable to become pregnant and will no longer have heat cycles. Recovery from anesthesia takes several hours, some longer than others. Generally, by the next day, the cat has recovered completely from the anesthesia. Recovery from the actual surgery takes at least a week.

What To Expect When You Get Your Cat Home

Most cats will sleep most of the night because of the anesthesia. This is very normal. By the next day, the cat should be more alert and moving around more. Most cats will not feel like eating the night of the surgery. This too is very normal. Generally, by the next day the cat's appetite will start to return. Kittens sometimes will be more active and have an appetite shortly after surgery because they recover from the anesthesia faster than adults do.

Feeding After Surgery

Adult cats can be given a small amount of their regular food and a small amount of water at around 8 pm the night of the surgery. Again, many cats will not be interested in eating, but you can offer it to her anyway. If she is hungry, do not allow her to eat or drink a large amount at one time because this may upset her stomach and cause vomiting or diarrhea. By the next day, she can eat whatever amount she wants to. Kittens (4 months and younger) are fed shortly after they are up and walking after surgery. You may feed your kitten her regular diet as soon as she is home.

Activity After Surgery

It is very important that you limit your cat's activity for at least 7-10 days. She has sutures (stitches) inside her body where the ovaries and uterus once were and along the inside and outside of the abdominal wall. These sutures provide strength to the tissues while they heal. The healing process takes at least seven days. If the sutures are put under any stress from jumping, running, moving too much, or being handled too much, they may break and internal bleeding may occur or the incision may come open. It is best that she stay indoors for at least 7 days and be confined in a small area to limit activity.

Caring For The Incision- We recommend Ecollars for all surgical patients.

It is natural for your pet to want to lick the incision site and keep it clean. However, excessive licking can lead to irritation, swelling, and disruption of the sutures. If this happens, infection could occur or the incision may come open. It is important to check the incision everyday for any swelling, bleeding, discharge, or pain. If she licks the incision too much, you should go to your nearest pet store and purchase an E-collar to prevent her from being able to reach the area. Many cats will have a mild to moderate reaction to the stitches that are underneath the skin. Many times a knot will develop that is the size of a marble. As long as there is no pain, redness, or discharge associated with the swelling and the cat appears fine in all other respects, it is generally normal. However, if there is any concern, please call us and we will look at the incision to make sure it is normal.

Stitches

Unless you are told otherwise, your cat does not have external stitches. All stitches are on the inside and the very outer layer of skin is held together with surgical glue. If you are told that your cat has stitches, she will need to return in 7-10 days to have those removed.

Bathing

Your cat can not have a bath for at least 7 days.

Over The Counter Pain Relievers

We do not recommend that you give your pet any over the counter pain relievers such as aspirin, tylenal, ibuprofen, ect. Some of these drugs may be toxic to your pet and many interfere with blood clotting which could cause internal bleeding after surgery. If you feel that your pet needs pain medications, you should purchase the prescription pain reliever that we offer here.

Potential Complications

Spaying of an animal is a very safe surgery; however, complications can occur. Please contact us, your regular veterinarian, or an emergency clinic if you notice any of the following: pale gums, depression, vomiting, diarrhea, inappetence, discharge from the incision, bleeding from incision, swelling or pain at the incision, discharge from vulva, difficulty urinating, bloody urination, coughing, sneezing, labored breathing, or anything else you feel concerned about.

Vaccines and Vaccine Reactions

Vaccines are designed to increase your pet's immunity to certain diseases. No vaccine is 100% effective. It takes at least two weeks for your pet's immunity to increase after being vaccinated. Vaccine reactions can occur with any vaccine. Symptoms include but are not limited to vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of the face and legs, depression, pain at the injection site, difficulty breathing. If you notice any of these symptoms please contact us, your regular veterinarian, or an emergency clinic.

SANTA 678-560-6070
Sandy Springs ER 404-252-7881
GVS 404-459-0903

Cobb ER 770-424-9157
Roswell ER 770-594-2266

Westside ER 770-819-1090
Riverdale ER 770-994-9291

I, acting as owner or agent for the owner of _____, have read and fully understand the discharge instructions listed above. I understand that my failure to follow these instructions may lead to complications and/or delayed recovery.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

DO NOT SIGN UNLESS YOU HAVE READ THIS FORM COMPLETELY.