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POST SURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Keep your pet confined

There are many anesthetic drugs available, and animals can react in a number of ways, depending on their age, weight, general health, species, and breed (in some cases). Just because your cat came home from her spay last year running around as if nothing happened, doesn't mean that your other cat will come home from his dental the same way. Keeping your pet calm the first 24 hours will speed anesthetic recovery and restricting activity for several days will help prevent a surgical complication.

2. Make sure your pet is warm

If your pet is still a big groggy, s/he may have trouble maintaining normal body heat. If the animal is normally an outdoor pet, it is wise to bring them inside if the outside temperature is cool. Indoor pets may benefit from a comforter or pet "snuggler" bed. Do not put your pet on a heating pad unless directed by your veterinarian. This can cause severe burns if used improperly!

3. Monitor the food and water intake

Many pets are nauseated after anesthesia. Allow your friend to calm down before offering water or food. We recommend limiting access to water ($\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup every hour) for the first 5 hours depending on the size of your pet. If you see signs of nausea (excessive salivation, burping, or vomiting) after drinking don't offer food until the next day. If all goes well a small ($\frac{1}{4}$ of normal portion) amount of bland food can be offered. You should be able to resume normal food and water consumption the next day.

4. Remove obstacles and hazards for your pet

Assuming that your home/yard is already pet-proof and safe for your pet, take an extra moment to consider things anew. Your pet may not be completely "with it" as far as depth perception, coordination, and judgment for several hours after they are home after an anesthetic procedure. This can result in injury from common things; such as stairs, chairs or other physical obstacles. A dog or cat crate may be the safest option.

5. Be careful handling or moving your pet

We recommend limiting exercise to leash walking only for the first 5 days after spays and castrations. No swimming or bathing for 5 days or until sutures are removed. Protect bandages from moisture (use plastic booties on foot bandages while your pet is outside, be sure to remove the booties when inside). If the bandage gets wet it is best to

remove it and come to the hospital for a replacement (an old , clean sock is a good temporary bandage replacement). Post surgical pain medications are routinely given to our patients. Depending on the procedure your pet may still be experiencing some post surgical discomfort. This can cause an overreaction to "normal" things, such as jumping up on the bed, being picked up, or going for a walk. Move a little more slowly and carefully the first few hours after your pet is home to ensure that they can be handled normally

6. Supervise pet-to-pet interactions upon arrival home

While humans may assume that the pets miss each other and can't wait to see each other again, this is not always the case. Pets, especially cats, may view the returning pet as foreign, due to all of the new odd smells and possible different behavior of the returning pet. Conversely, exuberant pets may be "too much" for the returning pet; the excited greetings and playtime will need to wait until the anesthesia is completely worn off and sutures (if applicable) have healed.

7. Take your pet outside as soon as possible to allow them to relieve themselves

This may seem obvious, but important nonetheless. Some pets will not use the available toilet facilities at the vet or they may be too excited/groggy to relieve themselves prior to the trip home. Additionally, many pets receive IV (intravenous) fluids while under anesthesia, leading to full bladders!

8. Take note of anything unusual and call us to discuss

If your pet experiences any odd behavior, drainage from a surgical site, or delayed recovery from anesthesia, please call us as soon as possible to discuss. We may need to make a note in your pet's record for future reference.