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Neutering (castration) in Dogs

The testicles of a male dog are contained within the scrotum. Occasionally, one or both testicles do not descend into the scrotal sac, but rather are retained within the abdominal cavity or inguinal area (groin). Neutering a male dog requires general anesthesia, and sterile operating technique. Both testicles are surgically removed either through a small incision in front of the scrotum, or if retained, from within the abdominal cavity or inguinal area. We recommend that your dog be neutered at 4-6 months of age.

The advantages of neutering your pet include:

- the elimination of sexual activity.
- a decreased tendency for your dog to exhibit aggression toward other dogs or people. However, castration is not a replacement for obedience training by the owner.
- often a reduced likelihood that your dog will roam or stray from home.
- the prevention and/or treatment of testicular or prostatic diseases, more common in older dogs.

Important Considerations Before Surgery

- Your dog should be free of heartworms and intestinal parasites, and all vaccinations should be current prior to surgery.
- Your pet should not receive any food or water by mouth for 12 hours before admittance for surgery, unless otherwise instructed by your veterinarian.

Lots of TLC for your pet!!

While castrations are one of the most common surgical procedures performed, all surgeries can cause pain and stress. Because pain can slow the healing process, the care that you provide your pet in the first hours and days after coming home from the hospital is very important to a successful and comfortable recovery. During this post-operative period, your pet will benefit from rest, appropriate nutrition as recommended by your veterinarian, effective pain management ... and love!!

Pain Management Begins in the Hospital

Our skilled surgeons take every precaution to minimize the pain of surgery. All surgeries are painful, whether the patient is a person or a dog. Dogs can experience significant pain during the post-surgical period. The degree of pain ... and the amount of pain that your pet tells you that she feels ... often varies. Because we want to ensure the best possible care for our patients, we advocate the administration of effective pain relief medications to your pet in a proactive approach before, during and after surgery. Your pet is very important to you and your family ... your pet is very important to us!!

Pain Management Continues at Home

When your dog returns home:

- Keep your dog in a quiet, warm and comfortable place.
- Limit your dog's contact with other animals and children for the first twelve (12) hours so that she may rest with minimal disturbance.
- Allow your pet to resume normal activity *gradually*, and limit her exercise to on-leash walking for 7-10 days. Discourage any type of running, jumping or rough play.
- Keep your pet's incision dry and clean. Examine your pet's incision daily for swelling, redness, discharge or reopening of the surgical site.
- Prevent your dog from scratching, licking or biting her stitches.
- Your dog will be evaluated at our veterinary hospital for suture removal in 10-14 days. Please schedule an appointment.

Follow your veterinarian's pain medication prescription

We often prescribe a *nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID)* as a pain relief medication for your pet to ensure her comfort during the recovery period.

Follow the dosing instructions as written on the prescription label carefully. Your dog may not be able to tolerate some pain relief medications (NSAIDs). Signs of intolerance may include loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhea. If these signs occur, contact your veterinarian.

Contact us immediately if:

- your dog scratches or bites at her incision and/or removes any sutures.
- there is discharge or bleeding from her incision, or if her incision is red or swollen.
- your pet is listless, refuses to eat or drink, or vomits after the first day at home.
- your dog's general health changes during the post-operative period.