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Ovariohysterectomy (spaying) in Dogs

Ovariohysterectomy is a major abdominal surgery requiring general anesthesia, and sterile operating technique. The ovaries and uterus are surgically removed, thus preventing bothersome estrus or “heat” cycles, and possible pregnancy following breeding with a male dog. We recommend that ovariohysterectomy be performed at 5-9 months of age, prior to the first “heat” cycle.

The advantages of spaying your pet include:

- the elimination of estrus or “heat” cycles.
- the prevention of pregnancy.
- the prevention of a uterine infection, more common in older dogs.
- the prevention of ovarian and/or uterine tumors.
- a decreased incidence of mammary gland or breast cancers in dogs spayed prior to their first estrus or “heat” cycle.
- the prevention of some skin disorders.

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 nor water by mouth for 12 hours before admittance for surgery, unless otherwise instructed by your veterinarian.

Lots of TLC for your pet!!

While ovariohysterectomies 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 period of recovery, 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.