

# Pre- and Post -Surgery Information

## Preparing For Anesthetic Procedures or Surgery

### Preparing your pet:

If you notice your pet is coughing or sneezing, vomiting, or has diarrhea, please call to speak with a veterinarian before scheduling surgery.

### Cats and Dogs:

Your pet should not eat anything after 9pm the evening before the surgery. Your pet may have free access to water.

### Exotics:

Rats, mice, rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, and ferrets should have free access to food and water at all times. Please bring your pet's food and water bottle when you drop him off.

### Admitting Times:

**Linda Mar Veterinary Hospital:** When scheduling your surgery, the receptionist will assign you an admit time. This time is generally between 7:00am and 7:50am. Please bring your pet in at your assigned admit time.

**Coastal Cat Clinic:** Please bring your pet in to be admitted between 8:00am and 8:30am. Late or early admittance is available only by special arrangement.

### The day of the procedure

The veterinarian will examine all of the scheduled patients and determine the order in which the procedures will be performed. Your pet will be well cared for and closely monitored throughout the day regardless of their position on the schedule. Although we try to complete all procedures by 3PM, the arrival of emergencies may cause a slight delay, and so we cannot predict when your pet's procedure will be completed. The veterinarian will call you in the afternoon to discuss how the procedure went and schedule a time for you to receive aftercare instructions with our discharge nurse.

### Evening of discharge:

Your pet should be kept quiet and warm. Offer only small amounts of food and water. It is not unusual for some animals not to eat until the following day. Your pet's recovery time will vary depending on the age, species, and type of procedure performed. Please call to discuss any questions or concerns for care. After-hours, please call North Peninsula Veterinary Emergency Clinic at (650) 348-2575.

### Recognizing Pain in Pets

Pain medications (analgesics) are often prescribed with a broad dosing range, and you will be asked to adjust the dose according to your pet's level of discomfort. By providing adequate pain control for your pet, their recovery may be improved and accelerated. Unfortunately, it is hard to objectively judge the severity of pain in any animal, be it a human, a cat, or a dog. Ultimately, your knowledge of your pet's usual behaviors and habits makes you the best judge of their comfort level.

We have listed below some of the more common signs of pain or discomfort that may be observed in cats and dogs. It is important to note that pain thresholds differ dramatically between individual animals, and pain perception depends on species, breed, age, gender, time of day and individual temperament. In general, younger animals tend

to have a lower threshold to pain. Older and debilitated pets may not show much response to pain but feel it just the same.

## **Recognizing Pain in Cats**

Cats in pain are more stoic than dogs and mask their pain more effectively. However, there are many different behaviors a cat may exhibit if painful or uncomfortable. Some of the more common signs are:

- Loss or decrease of appetite
- Hiding or refusal/reluctance to move
- Personality changes (increased affection, aggression, or anti-social behavior)
- Changes in resting patterns (insomnia or increased sleeping/lethargy)
- Excessive grooming (licking, chewing, or pawing) of painful areas
- Guarding painful areas by scratching, biting, or hissing when touched
- Flattening ears, or adopting an irritated/perturbed expression
- Favoring painful areas (limping or avoiding bearing weight on painful limbs)
- Changes in vocalization patterns (crying, growling, purring, or change in the tone of vocalizations)
- Changes in voiding behaviors (how often and where animals eliminate waste)
- Dilation of eyes, rapid or open-mouthed breathing, or fever

## **Recognizing Pain in Dogs**

Hunting and working breeds of dogs are generally more stoic and resistant to pain than are toy and miniature breeds. There many different behaviors a dog may exhibit if painful or uncomfortable. Some of the more common signs are:

- Loss or decrease of appetite
- A fixed or staring expression
- Refusal or reluctance change body position (may stay in a hunched or arching position)
- Excessive salivation or licking of the lips
- Personality changes (increased attention-seeking, aggression, timidity, or anti-social behavior)
- Changes in resting patterns (insomnia or increased sleeping/lethargy)
- Excessive grooming (licking, chewing, or pawing) of painful areas
- Guarding painful areas by scratching, biting, or growling when touched
- Favoring painful areas (limping or avoiding bearing weight on painful limbs)
- Changes in vocalization patterns (whining or whimpering, or change in the tone of vocalizations)
- Changes in voiding behaviors (how often and where animals eliminate waste)
- Dilation of eyes, rapid breathing (panting), or fever

## **Post-Neuter Care**

### **Feline Neuter Aftercare**

The surgery to neuter your cat involves a superficial incision to remove both testicles. Your cat is given a short-acting general anesthetic for the procedure.

### ***What to expect during recovery***

Although many cats seem absolutely 'back to normal' by the evening of the surgery, oftentimes they will be sleepy and want to be left alone. You can offer small amounts of food and water after 6 PM in the evening after surgery – large amounts of either, on an empty stomach, may induce vomiting. If your cat vomits, take away all food and water and try again in the morning. We recommend that you keep your cat inside for at least 48 hours or until you are assured that he is eating and acting normally.

Your cat will keep his incision clean by normal grooming – there is no need for you to wash it, and no need to substitute shredded paper for his cat litter. The scrotum (the sac that held the testicles) will oftentimes swell with fluid – this is normal and should resolve within a week.

Your cat will have no sutures to be removed. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call us. We recommend that you restrict your cat's activity for at least 5 days.

It is possible that your cat may still be able to impregnate a female for the 30 days after neutering. If you have unaltered female cats in your home, or if there are unaltered female cats in your neighborhood; it is advisable to keep the cats apart.

### ***Managing post-operative pain***

Unfortunately, it is hard to objectively judge the severity of pain in any animal, be it a human, a cat, or a dog. Cats in pain are more stoic than dogs and mask their pain more effectively. However, there are many different behaviors a cat may exhibit if painful or uncomfortable. Ultimately, your knowledge of your pet's usual behaviors and habits makes you the best judge of their comfort level. By providing adequate pain control for your pet, their recovery may be improved and accelerated. Please see our information on "Recognizing Pain in Pets" for additional information.

## **Canine Neuter Aftercare**

The surgery to neuter your dog involves superficial incisions to remove both testicles. Your dog is given a general anesthetic for the procedure.

### ***What to expect during recovery***

Tonight your dog may be sleepy and may not want to eat or drink. You can offer small amounts of food and water after 6 PM in the evening after surgery – large amounts of either, on an empty stomach, may induce vomiting. If your cat vomits, take away all food and water and try again in the morning. If your dog vomits, take away all food and water and try again in the morning. Your dog should be able to return to his normal feeding schedule in 1-2 days. We recommend that you restrict your dog's activity (leash walk) for at least 5 days.

You may notice some redness, a small amount of swelling, even some moisture along the incision line in the first few days. This is normal and should resolve without treatment, though you can gently cleanse the area with warm water to keep it clean and dry. The scrotum (the sac that held the testicles) will sometimes swell with fluid and appear just as though the testicles were still there. This swelling should disappear in about 10 days. Keep your dog from licking the incision line. If necessary, you can purchase an Elizabethan Collar to insure that he won't bother his incision when you are not at home to monitor him.

Your dog may have external sutures. External skin sutures need to be removed in 10-14 days. Please call to schedule a technician appointment. There is no charge for suture removal.

It is possible that your dog may still be able to impregnate a female for 30 days after neutering. If you have an unaltered female near or in heat, it would be advisable to keep the dogs apart.

If your dog coughs a little during the first 24 hours, this is probably due to irritation from the tube that is placed in his throat to maintain the gas anesthesia. If coughing persists, or you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call the hospital.

### ***Managing post-operative pain***

Unfortunately, it is hard to objectively judge the severity of pain in any animal, be it a human, a cat, or a dog. However, there are many different behaviors a dog may exhibit if painful or uncomfortable. Ultimately, your knowledge of your pet's usual behaviors and habits makes you the best judge of their comfort level. By providing adequate pain control for your pet, their recovery may be improved and accelerated. Please see our information on "Recognizing Pain in Pets" for additional information.

## **Post-Spay Care**

### **Feline Spay (Ovariohysterectomy) Aftercare**

The surgery to spay your cat is a routine but major abdominal surgery. It involves removing the entire uterus as well as both ovaries and required a general anesthetic.

#### ***What to expect during recovery***

The evening after surgery your cat may be sleepy and may not want to eat or drink. You can offer small amounts of food and water after 6 PM evening after surgery – large amounts of either, on an empty stomach, may induce vomiting. If your cat vomits, take away all food and water and try again in the morning. She should be able to return to her normal feeding schedule in 1-2 days.

You may notice some redness, a small amount of swelling, even some moisture along the incision line in the first few days. This is normal and should resolve without treatment, though you can gently cleanse the area with warm water to keep it clean and dry. Keep your cat from licking the incision line. If necessary, you can purchase an Elizabethan Collar to insure that she won't bother her incision when you are not at home to monitor her.

Your cat may have external sutures. External skin sutures need to be removed in 10-14 days. Please call for a technician appointment. There is no charge for suture removal.

If your cat coughs a little during the first 24 hours, this is probably due to irritation from the tube that is placed in her throat to maintain the gas anesthesia. If coughing persists, or you have any questions or worries, don't hesitate to call the hospital. We recommend that you restrict your cat's activity for at least 5 days.

### ***Managing post-operative pain***

Unfortunately, it is hard to objectively judge the severity of pain in any animal, be it a human, a cat, or a dog. Cats in pain are more stoic than dogs and mask their pain more effectively. However, there are many different behaviors a cat may exhibit if painful or uncomfortable. Ultimately, your knowledge of your pet's usual behaviors and habits makes you the best judge of their comfort level. By providing adequate pain control for your pet, their recovery may be improved and accelerated. Please see our information on "Recognizing Pain in Pets" for additional information.

### **Canine Spay (Ovariohysterectomy) Aftercare**

The surgery to spay your dog is a routine, but nonetheless, major abdominal surgery. It involves removing the entire uterus as well as both ovaries and required a general anesthetic.

#### ***What to expect during recovery***

The evening after surgery your dog may be sleepy and may not want to eat or drink, or be uncharacteristically thirsty. You can offer small amounts (approximately half of usual offerings) of food and water after 6 PM the evening after surgery – large amounts of either, on an empty stomach, may induce vomiting. If your dog vomits, take away all food and water and try again in the morning. Your dog should be able to return to her normal feeding schedule in 1-2 days. We recommend that you restrict your dog's activity (leash walk) for at least 5 days.

You may notice some redness, a small amount of swelling, even some moisture along the incision line in the first few days. This is normal and should resolve without treatment, though you can gently cleanse the area with warm water

to keep it clean and dry. Keep your dog from licking the incision line. If necessary, you can purchase an Elizabethan Collar to insure that she won't bother her incision when you are not at home to monitor her.

Please monitor your pet's abdominal incision for odor, discharge, or any changes that seem unusual. Please call us if you have any questions regarding your pet's recovery.

Your dog may have external sutures. External skin sutures need to be removed in 10-14 days. Please call to schedule a technician appointment. There is no charge for suture removal. If your dog coughs a little during the first 24 hours, this is probably due to irritation from the tube that is placed in her throat to maintain the gas anesthesia. If coughing persists, or you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call the hospital.

### ***Managing post-operative pain***

Unfortunately, it is hard to objectively judge the severity of pain in any animal, be it a human, a cat, or a dog. However, there are many different behaviors a dog may exhibit if painful or uncomfortable. Ultimately, your knowledge of your pet's usual behaviors and habits makes you the best judge of their comfort level. By providing adequate pain control for your pet, their recovery may be improved and accelerated. Please see our information on "Recognizing Pain in Pets" for additional information.