

# Dehart Vet Services

## DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

- Your pet had **major surgery** with general anesthesia, which means he/she had an invasive procedure done while unconscious.
- In female dogs and cats, the uterus and ovaries are removed through a small incision in the abdominal wall.
- In male dogs and cats, the **scrotum** is not removed, only the testicles. Male dogs have an incision just above the scrotum. Male cats have an **open incision**. Male cats may appear as if they still have testicles. This is normal as the scrotum swells slightly after surgery – the swelling should subside gradually through the recovery period. Being open a small amount of blood may also be present.
- All animals except male cats receive a small green **tattoo** near their incision. This is a universally recognized tattoo that identifies your pet has been spayed or neutered.

## WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU BRING YOUR PET HOME

- We strongly recommend you keep your pet **confined** in a crate or small room in a climate-controlled environment the night after surgery.
- Your pet may be **groggy** when you get home, due to the effects from the anesthesia. Your pet will typically require 18-24 hours to recover from the general anesthesia.
- Your pet may **sleep** much more than normal for 18-24 hours following surgery.
- Your pet may be a little **agitated** or **aggressive** due to the after-effects of anesthesia and/or discomfort. Avoid handling the animal too much as he/she may try to bite or scratch you.
- **Isolate** the animal from children and other pets. He/she may be more prone to snapping or nipping at other pets and people due to the after-effects of anesthesia and/or discomfort.
- Your pet may have **poor balance**. This will make climbing stairs or getting in and out of the car more difficult than usual, so be ready to assist.
- **Sudden movements** can damage the stitches. Lift dogs by wrapping your arms around the dog's chest/front legs and rear/back legs. Avoid putting pressure on their abdomen.

- **Do not give your pet over the counter/human pain medication.** Your pet received pain medication before and during surgery that keeps them comfortable for 24-48 hours. Additional pain medication can be purchased at discharge if desired. If your pet seems uncomfortable please contact us and we can provide additional prescription pain medication if needed.
- You can offer a **small amount of food and water** to your pet once they get home, but they may not want to eat or eat very little.
- Please **limit your pet's activity** to as minimal as possible. Increased activity can cause post-surgical complications that may result in the need for surgical revision.

### **INCISION SITE**

- What the incision looks like on the day of surgery is what we consider normal. A small amount of serous drainage can be normal. A very small amount of redness/swelling at incision may occur. The incision may also form a small scab.
- If your pet allows, **check incision site** at least once daily for one week. Check for excessive redness, swelling, discharge, blood or if incision site is open.
- If your dog has a **belly/scrotal wrap** due to post-surgical bruising, please remove after 24 hours and re-wrap and contact us if bleeding or bruising has worsened.
- **Do not** clean or apply any topical ointment to the incision site.
- **Do not** get incision wet until the skin layer is healed, which is typically 7-10 days.
- **Slight opening of the skin layer or scabbing can be normal healing.** If concerned please bring these concerns to our attention.

### **SUTURES**

- Unless you are told otherwise, your pet **does not** have external sutures that require removal. If you are told that your pet has skin sutures or skin staples, he/she will need to return in 7-10 days to have those removed.
- All sutures are **absorbable**. You may feel residual suture under the skin for up to 3 months. This may present as a **small lump** under the skin. The lump may appear larger in more active and leaner pets. The very outer layer of skin is held together with surgical glue.

## FEEDING

- Anesthesia tends to make animals experience **nausea**, so your pet may not want to eat when he/she gets home after surgery. Your pet's appetite should return gradually within 24 hours of surgery.
- Offer a **small amount** of food and water as soon as the animal is fully awake. If vomiting occurs or they are not interested, wait until the next day to give more food. Provide your normal amount of food and water to your pet on the day after surgery.
- **Do not** change your pet's diet at this time and do not give junk food, table scraps, milk or any other people food for a period of one week. This could mask post-surgical complications.

## DO NOT ALLOW YOUR PET TO LICK OR BITE THE INCISION

- **Licking** or biting the incision could cause the wound to re-open and become infected. To keep your pet from licking the incision during the healing process we recommend an E-collar be worn during the recovery period.
- Injuries can result from licking, most commonly scrotal swelling, that may result in the need for additional surgeries and/or medications at your expense.

## IN HEAT/Pregnant

- If your female dog or cat was in heat at the time of surgery, you must keep her **away from un-neutered males** for at least two weeks. While she is unable to become pregnant, she will still attract intact males for a short period of time. Being mounted can cause internal injuries.
- If your female was in-heat or pregnant they are at a higher risk of internal bleeding. It is important to keep them quiet and monitor them closely during the recovery period.

## DEWCLAW REMOVAL

- If your pet had the rear dewclaws removed please **keep bandages on for 2 days** and then remove.
- Look for swelling in the foot as this could signify that the wrap may be too tight. We want to ensure that there is no bleeding so the wrap will be snug but not snug enough that the foot should swell.

- There are no sutures to be removed unless states. If the incision starts bleeding, re-wrap lightly as contact us.
- Please prevent your dog from licking the incisions as this will cause them to reopen and become infected.

## **ACTIVITY**

- The healing process takes on average **7-10 days**.
- **Any activity could disrupt the healing process.** This is most commonly seen with **scrotal swelling** and **seromas** around spay incisions, or opening of the skin layer.
- Some animals are active after surgery, while others are quiet. It is very important that you limit your pet's activity during the healing process.
- Pets should be kept indoors where they can stay clean, dry, and warm, as well as monitored appropriately.
- **No running, jumping, playing, swimming, or other strenuous activity** during the 7-10 day recovery period.
- **Do not bathe** your pet or have it groomed during the recovery period.
- When outdoors dogs should be on a leash and taken for short walks only for next 10 days.
- Non-feral cats should be kept indoors for the next 7-10 days.
- Keep animal away from all hazards (including stairs).
- **If our pet appears lethargic or inoperant, remove e-collar under supervision** to see if it perks them up
- Due to the unique circumstance of **feral cats**, they should be monitored for at least 24 hours before being released

## **POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS**

Spaying and neutering are generally safe surgeries; however, complications can and do occur. Given our mobile nature we are not able to provide veterinary care in the event of an emergency after surgery once the veterinarian has left the location for the day. If you have general questions or concerns after surgery you may call/text Dehart Veterinary Services at 903-590-7722. If after 4p the call may be answered the following day. If your pet is experiencing a true emergency, please contact the veterinary facility located nearest you. Please bear in mind that not all areas have veterinarians that will see emergencies.

The following are justification for immediate notification of a veterinarian:

- Pale gums
  - Severe depression, lethargy or collapse
  - Vomiting lasting past 12 hours post-op
  - Decreased appetite lasting past 12 hours post-op
  - Difficulty urinating
  - Labored breathing
  - Malodorous discharge or excessive bleeding from incision
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- Dehart Veterinary Services, PLLC. will **re-check your pet at no charge** at our clinic for any complications resulting directly from surgery. There may be a minimal cost for medication if needed (such as antibiotics) or an e-collar. If further surgery is required costs and consent will be discussed prior.
  - Due to our mobile nature you are expected to **come to one of our locations** in order to have your pet rechecked.
  - If you take your pet to be rechecked by your regular veterinarian you are responsible for the cost, as outlined in the surgery release form you signed prior to surgery. Please follow up with us or have your regular veterinarian forward your pet's medical records to us for review.
  - Dehart Veterinary Services, PLLC. cannot be held responsible for complications resulting from failure to follow post-operative instructions or for contagious diseases in post-operative period; as outlined in your surgical release form.
  - Please refer to your regular veterinarian to address illnesses or injuries that are not a direct result of surgery.
  - **Common complications** include scrotal swelling, skin dehiscence, incisional infection, seromas, and suture granulomas. These typically are non-emergency complications that can be brought to our attention during our business hours. If you go to an emergency room or your regular veterinarian, you are responsible for the cost.

## Description of surgical procedure performed for owner and full service veterinarian reference.

### Dogs

After examination dogs are pre-medicated with an appropriate weight dependent dose of acepromazine and butorphanol via subcutaneous injection. Dogs over the age of 6 years receive a decreased dose of acepromazine.

Induction is performed via intravenous injection of an appropriate weight dependent dose of midazolam and ketamine. The dogs are then intubated.

Dogs are maintained on isoflurane during surgery

Dogs then receive a subcutaneous weight dependent dose of meloxicam and penicillin. Eyes are lubricated.

Dogs are then prepped for surgery with aseptic technique.

#### Females –

Bladder is expressed prior to surgery

Ventral midline incision

Ovarian pedicles are exposed and ligated via a Miller's Knot using appropriately sized monocryl absorbable suture

The uterine body is isolated and ligated with up to 3 Miller's Knots (depending on size) using appropriately sized monoaryl absorbable suture

The abdominal wall, subcutaneous, and intradermal layers are all closed using appropriately sized monocryl absorbable suture

The skin is reinforced with surgical grade tissue glue

#### Males –

Owners/veterinarians can request a description of cryptorchid procedure when necessary.

For dogs over 6 months of age a pre-scrotal approach is taken.

Each testicle is exposed and ligated via two Miller Knots The subcutaneous and intradermal layers are closed The skin is reinforced with surgical grade tissue glue For dogs under 6 months old a scrotal approach is taken

Each testicle is removed through one central incision and ligated via instrument tie.

The skin is reinforced with surgical grade tissue glue.

For dogs under 6 months old a scrotal approach is taken.

Each testicle is removed through one central incision and ligated via instrument tie

## **Cats**

After examination cats receive a weight dependent intramuscular dose of a mixture of dexmedetomidine, ketamine and buprenorphine. This serves as premedication and induction.

Cats then receive subcutaneous injections of weight dependent doses of penicillin and meloxicam. Eyes are lubricated.

Cats are then prepped for surgery with aseptic technique. After surgery the cat's dosage of dexmedetomidine is reversed with atipamezole.

### Females –

Bladder is expressed prior to surgery

Ventral midline incision

Ovarian pedicles are exposed and ligated via instrument tie

The uterine body is ligated via 1-2 Miller Knots using 2-0 monocryl absorbable suture

The abdominal wall, subcutaneous, and intradermal layers are all closed using appropriately sized monocryl absorbable suture

The skin is reinforced with surgical grade tissue glue

### Males –

Each testicle is removed through one medial scrotal incision and ligated via instrument tie.