



Postoperative Instructions

INDICATIONS TO SEEK CARE IMMEDIATELY

- Pale gums
- Non-responsive, extremely lethargic
- Sudden pronounced swelling at surgical site
- Gaping or open incisions
- Excessive bleeding
- Persistent vomiting, diarrhea, lack of appetite

Food and Water

You may offer a small meal the evening after surgery. Your pet may still be nauseous. Your pet may not have an appetite until the next day. This is normal. Small dogs, puppies, and kittens less than six months old should be encouraged to eat the same day as surgery. If your pet vomits the evening after surgery, do not feed them. You can offer a small meal again in the morning. If your pet does **not regain a normal appetite or continues vomiting**, please call our office or your veterinarian immediately.

Activity

Please **keep your pet indoors or confined** in a safe, clean environment for the next 14 days. Dogs should be kept on a leash to go outside. They should not be allowed to run, jump, or play rough for the next 14 days. Owned cats should be kept inside a calm, quiet room. Your pet may seem shaky or agitated the night of surgery. If this occurs, keep them in a dark, quiet room while they recover. Male cats and dogs may remain fertile for 30 days after being neutered. During this time, please keep them away from females that have not been spayed.

Monitoring

Please check your pet's gum color frequently. Your pet's gums should remain pink and moist. If your pet has naturally black gums, you can check under their lip or gently pull down on their eyelid to see the color. **If you notice pale gums or inner eyelids**, contact FACE or another veterinarian immediately. Monitor your pet's energy. Most pets resume normal energy 24-48 hours after surgery. Monitor your pet's pain level. It is normal for pets to experience minor discomfort after surgery, but this should get better 24-48 hours after surgery. If you notice your pet is very tired or seems to be in pain, contact FACE or another veterinarian immediately.

Incision

Check your pet's incision daily for redness, swelling, leaking, or openings. Some redness and swelling at the incision site is normal a few days after surgery. Contact the clinic if it seems too much to you. Keep the incision clean and dry. Do not bathe your pet for 14 days. Your pet should not lick the incision. If your pet licks the incision, they will need to wear an E-collar (cone) until the incision is healed. Stitches are buried under the skin and should not be seen. You may be able to feel the surgical steel used to close the incision under the skin. If you notice the steel is sticking out of the incision, please call FACE or another veterinarian. Your pet will have a small green tattoo applied near their incision or on their abdomen to indicate that they have been surgically sterilized.

Medications

Your pet may or may not be going home with oral medications. If they are not going home with pain medication, they have received enough pain medication at the clinic to last throughout their recovery. Please follow medication instructions closely and give medication with a small meal. **If it causes stomach problems (vomiting, diarrhea, lack of appetite)**, stop giving the medication and call FACE or another veterinarian.

Community Cats

Community cats should be offered food and water as soon as they are alert and aware. They should be fed a meal before they are released. Cats that are stressed may not eat and will be more comfortable eating in their normal environment.

A feral cat should remain in their trap until it is ready for release. To minimize stress, the trap should be kept in a warm, quiet, dimly lit room. Cover the trap with a lightweight sheet, such as a pillowcase. Friendly community cats should be kept in a safe, enclosed room, such as a bathroom or garage.

Do not attempt to handle feral cats. Gently lift the trap to see the incision and look for issues. You may notice slight bleeding from the incision or from the ear tip site immediately after surgery. This is normal and should get better as the cat calms down.

Most cats will urinate and defecate within 24 hours after surgery. Do not put a litterbox in a trap. Cats should be kept in a clean trap. The newspaper in the trap will help keep the cat dry if they urinate. Replace dirty newspaper with clean newspaper. Friendly community cats that are not recovering outside should be offered a litterbox.

When to release / return your community cat

Community cats should be released once they are alert, oriented, and able to walk. This usually happens 12-24 hours after surgery. Please contact the clinic if your community cat is not behaving normally after this time. The veterinary staff may recommend that female cats who have recently given birth be released the evening of surgery to return to their kittens. If it has been recommended that a community cat be confined longer than 24 hours after surgery, they should be moved to a large crate where they are safe and confined but able to move freely.

In Case of Emergency

During normal business hours - **MON - THUR, 9 to 5:30** - please call or text FACE for questions or concerns following your pet's surgery. Do not send messages via social media or email.

After hours, or if FACE is not open, please contact Airport Animal Emergi-Center, your full service veterinarian, or any 24-hour emergency veterinary clinic for guidance.

FACE Low-Cost Animal Clinic | 317.638.3223 | txt 317.680.1055
1505 Massachusetts Avenue | Indianapolis, Indiana 46201

Airport Animal Emergi-Center | 317.248.0832
5235 W Washington St. | Indianapolis, Indiana 46241

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