

# Discharge Instructions

Please carefully read the following care instructions

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Patient \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Procedure performed \_\_\_\_\_

Medications being dispensed: \_\_\_\_\_ Restrictions in activity: None \_\_\_\_\_ Mild \_\_\_\_\_

Moderate \_\_\_\_\_ Severe \_\_\_\_\_ Recommended re-evaluation appointments: In 10 to 14 days. Options for re-evaluation appointments:

\_\_\_\_\_ These instructions are specific to your pet's surgery and needs. Certainly some of what follows is a generalized version of discharge instructions but where specific requirements or recommendations are made, you will see highlighted areas that you need to pay special attention to. Success with many surgical procedures is a combination of what we do, what your pet does, and what you do during the period before, during and after surgery. If the instructions are unclear or do not seem to make sense to you **PLEASE ask questions**. Postoperative examinations: Please set up an appointment for this service at the front desk. Recheck examinations and subsequent procedures requiring bandages, radiographs (x-rays), anesthesia, etc that may be necessary are not included in the initial charges.

**Restriction in Activity:** We know how difficult it can be to restrict activity after surgery. Our recommendations are specific and should be followed as closely as possible. Some complications can many times be avoided completely just by preventing too much activity in the immediate postoperative period. Our specific recommendations are highlighted and will be found in the following attached pages.

**Pain Management:** Be sure you learn how to give the pain medication dispensed today before you leave. If you already have pain medication at home please follow the directions given to you by your primary care veterinarian. In case a "pain patch" (fentanyl patch) is present be sure you know when and how to remove it. Not all patients are released from the hospital with more than one pain medication. In some instances, due to disease states or concomitant drug administration, pain medication is not dispensed.

**Precautions That Should Be Observed After General Anesthesia:** Your pet may be groggy for about 12 hours after anesthesia. Therefore, it is important to assist your pet when getting into or out of automobiles, and walking and climbing up or down steps. At home, confine your pet to prevent accidents. Pacing, disorientation, and vocalization may occur on recovery. These signs may persist for 6-8 hours or more. Call your clinician if abnormal behavior persists. Food and water may be given (unless otherwise instructed by the clinician), but should be given only in small amounts. As the anesthetic agents wear off, your pet may experience slight discomfort. If your pet is in severe pain, contact us, your veterinarian, or the emergency clinic immediately. It is best to restrict children from pets for 18 to 24 hours; your pet may experience residual anesthesia and possible postoperative pain. Check first with your veterinarian before giving your pet any non-prescription drugs (such as aspirin). A sore throat or cough may be caused by the endotracheal tube (tube placed down the wind-pipe for general anesthesia). This usually lasts no longer than 24 hours. If it persists, please consult your veterinarian.

**Home Care Instructions for Surgical Incisions:** If your pet has an incisional wound or in some cases numerous incisional wounds: Please check your pet's incision site daily and take notice of any changes in appearance. Seroma (collection of bloody fluid) or dehiscence (break down and opening of the incision) are possible complications, especially with too much activity or tension at the surgery site. A certain amount of redness and swelling is normal for many wounds/incisions and is actually necessary for healing to begin. A noticeable increase in the degree of redness, pain, swelling, or drainage should be reported to your veterinarian or surgeon. It may or may not be a problem. Please do NOT use hydrogen peroxide to clean any wound. Warm soapy water is much preferred if wound cleaning is necessary. Your pet should not be allowed to lick, bite or chew at the incision site. If you find it impossible to stop your pet from doing this you should come in to the hospital and obtain an "Elizabethan" collar which is placed around the neck in order to prevent your pet from bothering the incision. There are no sutures that need to be removed. There is a bandage on the front leg that is a "band-aid" for where the intravenous catheter was placed for anesthesia. It can be removed in 2 hours. Just find the leading edge of the bandage material and un-wrap it. If bleeding occurs just apply some gentle pressure for a few seconds or so.

**BE SURE TO TALK WITH YOUR VETERINARIAN ABOUT WHEN TO COME IN FOR RECHECKS.  
DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL OR COME IN WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.**