

# SOCIETY for CALIFORNIA VETERINARY & VACCINE CARE

a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization

## POST-SURGERY HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ DO NOT remove your pet from its carrier until you and the pet are safely and securely inside your home.
- ✓ GROGGINESS, instability, and stomach upset can occur as a result of anesthesia. Do NOT offer food or water to pet upon returning home. For the first 3 hours, you may give one or two ice cubes to pet to lick. Observe your pet while licking an ice cube to make sure it doesn't swallow and choke on it. You may offer a small amount of water and food when pet is no longer groggy and is walking normally. Pet may be fed its usual amount of food and water 24 hours after surgery.
- ✓ DO NOT allow pet to lick or chew the incision. To prevent this from occurring, your pet may have been sent home with a plastic, cone-like apparatus which fits around its head (an "E-collar"), or you may need to obtain one. Keep the E-collar on your pet at all times except when you are able to stay along side and monitor your pet to make sure it does not begin licking or chewing the incision. Remember to place the E-collar back around pet's neck and keep it on pet at all other times.
- ✓ Make sure that pet is able to access its water and food bowls while wearing the E-collar, as it is cumbersome and often difficult for pets to maneuver and judge distances properly.
- ✓ IF your pet was sent home with a plastic, cone-like apparatus which fits around its head (an "E-collar"), keep it on your pet at all times UNLESS you are able to provide short periods of time where you can temporarily remove the E-collar and observe your pet closely to ensure it does not lick at the incision site. Also make sure that all water and food bowls are moved away from walls and are at a proper height so that your pet is able to drink/eat from them while wearing the E-collar.
- ✓ KEEP pet indoors in a quiet and safe place for at least the first 24 hours following surgery. Do not allow pet to be on furniture during this time, as your pet is groggy from the anesthesia and may fall off a bed, couch, or other furniture.
- ✓ DO NOT leave your pet alone for the first 24 hours after surgery. Pets must be supervised, kept warm, dry, and indoors for at least 24 hours after surgery to help prevent possible complications, or even death, as a result of exposure to outdoor temperature extremes and other environmental dangers.
- ✓ CATS must stay strictly indoors for 10 to 14 days while the incision site is healing. Use shredded paper or paper towels in the litter box instead of regular kitty litter for at least 7 days after surgery to prevent any grains of litter or even dust particles from irritating the incision area.
- ✓ DO NOT allow pet to climb stairs or be on furniture, run, jump, or partake in other exercise for 10 - 14 days following surgery.
- ✓ DO NOT allow your dog to go outside without being under your supervision. Dogs should stay indoors to allow for optimal recovery from surgery and should only be taken for short walks on a leash.
- ✓ KEEP area near incision clean by GENTLY dabbing around, NOT ON, the incision with hydrogen peroxide on a cotton ball.
- ✓ DO NOT allow your pet to get wet for at least 14 days after surgery. No bathing and no water on or near the incision site.
- ✓ CHECK the incision at least twice a day until healed (approximately 14 days). A small amount of blood seepage may be normal right after surgery. If you notice any continued bleeding, drainage, swelling or inflammation/severe redness, call us immediately or contact your regular veterinarian or an emergency pet hospital.
- ✓ UNLESS prescribed by your veterinarian, do NOT give ANY other medication to your pet, aside from what was sent home with you after your pet's surgery today. NEVER give your pet Tylenol or Aspirin, as they can both be fatal to your pet.
- ✓ There are no sutures to remove unless this box is checked.  If checked, sutures must be removed in 12 to 14 days by a veterinarian.

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### SEEK EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE FOR YOUR PET IF:

-  Pet is or becomes non-responsive or difficult to awaken or if gums appear pale (normal color of gums are pink); or
-  Pet has difficulty breathing or shows any indication of severe pain such as panting, loss of appetite, struggling to walk, or crying; or
-  Pet's incision is or becomes inflamed or swollen, oozes fluid or blood, or if any portion of the incision opens.

For questions concerning your pet's surgery or recovery, you may contact us at (714) 993-9193 or email us at [scvvc.pets@gmail.com](mailto:scvvc.pets@gmail.com).  
A list of several emergency pet hospitals is located on our website at [www.scvvc.org](http://www.scvvc.org).