



Humane Animal Partners  
Stanton- 302-998-2281  
Wilmington- 302-571-0111

## Discharge Instructions for Spay/Neuter

Your pet has just undergone general anesthesia and major surgery. Your pet will need special attention for a full, uneventful recovery, just as a human would. For the safety and well being of you and your pet please read and review the following instructions:

### Care after surgery

- Keep your pet confined to a small, warm, clean area. Avoid keeping them in loud areas or anywhere where they have access to stairs and avoid handling due to the anesthesia wearing off. \*cats may not want to leave carrier right away-This is normal.
- Your pet will likely be sleepy or acting a little wobbly/ off the evening of surgery, this is normal while the anesthesia wears off.
- Your pet will go home with an e-collar. They must wear the e-collar for 10-14 days post operation. You may briefly remove the e-collar while your pet eats and is under careful supervision. If the e-collar is not working for your animal, you can purchase alternatives such as a comfy e-collar or surgery suit. These can be purchased online or in the pet store. Please note that donut collars are not recommended because they can still allow your pet to reach the incision site. **It is very important that your pet does not lick or scratch the incision.** It will slow the healing process, potentially open the incision and can cause serious infections or worse. **If you refuse to have your pet use the e-collar, we are not liable for complications, and you will be responsible for additional costs incurred for medications or additional surgeries that may be needed. If you refuse to take home an e-collar we will have you sign a waiver for declining medical advice.**
- Your pet may not want to eat the night after surgery which is normal. If they seem hungry, offer them a quarter of their food. If they eat with no signs of nausea, you can feed them the rest. If they do not eat for more than a day after surgery this is not normal and they should be rechecked by HAP or your primary veterinarian.
- **Do not** soak the incision area in water. This means no baths or swimming for your pet until they are completely healed in 2 weeks. If the area gets dirty, you may dab the area with a clean towel and small amount of water.



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- **Do not** put any ointments on the site unless directed otherwise or give any pain medicine that was not prescribed by the vet. Your pet did receive appropriate pain medication as part of their anesthesia and their after care, if you feel they are still painful, please let us know.
- Significantly minimize your pet's activity level. For dogs, leash walk them only for 10-14 days, NO running or jumping. For outdoor cats, keep them inside for at least 10 days after surgery. Also restrict their access to places they can jump onto and hide, so you can monitor their healing. If they are feral, they must remain indoors for at least 48 hours. Any running or jumping could tear sutures and open incisions. If you need anti-anxiety medications to help keep your pet calm please let us know.
- Check their incision daily to make sure the area is healing normally. Some mild redness, swelling, and bruising can be normal in the first couple of days.

Things to look out for and what to do
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- All stitches are under the skin. They will dissolve in time (can take up to 6 months) and do not need to be removed. Some mild swelling and redness at the incision can be normal. Incisions should be monitored daily for the next 7-10 days to be sure they are clean, dry, and intact.
- Dog neuters may be prescrotal (closed incision ahead of the scrotum, or scrotal (open scrotal incision that may have some blood droplets and will scab over within a few days, but may take up to 7-10+ days to heal completely) depending on the doctor performing surgery- both are common techniques. Cat neuters will also have scrotal incisions that will potentially have some blood droplets, and will scab. Spays will have an incision on their abdomen. If a large amount of bleeding or swelling is noted please email, call or contact your primary veterinarian or urgent care with questions. You do not need to apply ointments or creams to the small open incisions.
- You may notice a small swelling on the incision site. This could be one of two things:
  - A **suture reaction**, which is a firm swelling along the incision. This is normal and will resolve in 2-8 weeks without treatment. But let us know if concerned.
  - A **seroma**, which is a pocket of sterile fluid at the incision. This occurs secondary to too much activity and will resolve in 2-8 weeks without



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treatment, but generally strict activity restriction and warm compresses may be recommended.

➤ **If your pet experiences any of the following, seek immediate care with your primary vet, emergency vet, or walk-in clinic, do not wait for HAP to respond if you are worried. We have limited availability over the weekend, Mondays and after hours:**

- Open incision- read above for scrotal incisions.
- Incision appears painful or has blood/ pus drainage
- Not active, pale gums, distended abdomen and not eating the day after surgery.
- Vaccine reaction: Mild fever, decreased appetite and activity, swelling face, hives, mild discomfort of injection area, pale gums, difficulty breathing

**\*Any expenses incurred outside of HAP are the pet owner's financial responsibility. HAP will not reimburse owners for care/ additional surgeries and procedures that could be done at our facility.**

If you have any questions regarding the surgery recovery or any complications, please call us during business hours. If you need to leave a voicemail please leave as much information as possible and a receptionist or tech will get back to you, if it is the weekend/ monday or after hours you may not receive a call back for 24-48 hours. We may have you email us a picture of the surgery site. Please make sure that the picture has a clear view of the area and is not blurry. You can send all incision site photos or emergent questions to [surgery@hapde.org](mailto:surgery@hapde.org). Make sure to include information such as your name, pet's name, a description of what is going on with your pet, and the best contact information to reach you at. If your pet requires a recheck or additional services, there will be a fee, along with the cost of any medication or supplies that may be dispensed. If any major medical issues arise and we are not available, please contact your primary vet or a 24 hour emergency vet clinic. Being a small low cost clinic, we do not have a doctor available 24/7 every day but we will always try to help if we are available. If your pet is experiencing a medical emergency, they will need to go to a full service hospital to care for their needs, but you are welcome to contact us first. Please do not wait an extended period of time for HAP to answer your call/ email if you are worried about your pet and it's a weekend or late at night.



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**Emergency vet clinics \*When visiting these places for an emergency visit, please give them a courtesy call and bring in your pet's records so they can prepare for your pet's visit. Again please be aware that you signed a consent form where you agreed that HAP will not reimburse for outside veterinary care unless prior approval from a director/ manager has been received.**

Blue Pearl Pet Hospital  
106 Geoffrey Dr  
Newark, DE 19713  
(302) 322-6933

Vida Veterinary Urgent Care  
300 S Ridge Ave  
Middletown, DE 19709  
(302) 676-8432

First State Urgent Vet  
4401 Concord Pike  
Wilmington, DE 19803  
(302) 609-0011 Wilmington HAP  
(302) 998-2281 Stanton/Christiana HAP  
surgery@hapde.org

Windcrest Animal Hospital  
3705 Lancaster Pike  
Wilmington, DE 19805  
(302) 998-2995

Pinnacle Veterinary specialists  
600 Evergreen Drive Suite 110  
Glen Mills, PA 19342  
(610) 477-8797