

Post-Op Instructions

KEEP THE DOG WARM AND IN A QUIET ENVIRONMENT UNTIL FULLY AWAKE!!!

1. Keep the dog contained in a small area, away from other pets, until it can move around normally. Its coordination is hindered by anesthesia, so it will not be able to jump or climb normally until the anesthesia fully wears off. **DO NOT ALLOW THE DOG TO JUMP ON ANYTHING!!** It can fall, miss its target and hurt itself.
2. Keep the dog in a dry, draft-free and sheltered area where you can check on it frequently. Dogs that are not fully recovered from anesthesia are at risk of hypothermia (dangerously low body temperature) which could make the dog become re-anesthetized and perhaps die. On the other hand, dogs may also become overheated if left in a warm car or in the sun. Bottom line, anesthesia inhibits the dog's ability to moderate their body temperature.
 - a. While the dog is still drowsy, keep it in a room that is as warm as possible, ideally near 85 degrees.
 - b. Cover the dog with sheets/blankets to trap warm air and preserve body heat.
3. Water and food (NOT MUCH IN THE FIRST 24 HOURS):
 - a. If the dog is alert and you have safe access, provide water in a way that it won't spill and get the dog wet.
 - b. If the dog is alert and you have safe access, you may provide a small serving of food.
4. Safely observe the dog for the following problems:
 - a. Failure to stay awake
 - b. Difficult breathing.
 - c. Slow recovery; the dog should be able to move around by 10 p.m.
 - d. Excess bleeding from the incision (below the tail for males, on the belly for females)
 - e. Any abnormalities (swelling, redness, smelly discharge) at the incision site.
 - f. If you notice any of these symptoms please **CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN OR PET EMERGENCY SERVICES (547-3577)**
5. **DO NOT** allow your dog to lick the surgery site. You may need to purchase an *Elizabethan collar* to prevent licking.
6. Safe release: Unless otherwise instructed or noted on the medical record (reverse side), release the dog 24 hours after surgery. Dogs must be judged individually—stress may hinder recovery, so release may be preferable for some dogs rather than keeping them in for a longer period of time.
7. Leash walk for 5 days to avoid tearing sutures out. No free running.