



## Wound Care

When your pet is ready to go home after being treated for a skin wound, the Veterinarian and/or treatment staff will discuss instructions for home care. Be sure you understand what actions are necessary to ensure a full recovery.

Here are some things to remember when treating your pet at home:

- Carefully follow the instructions of any medications your pet has been prescribed. For example: make sure your pet finishes the entire prescribed dose of antibiotics, even if their symptoms improve after a few doses. Contact our office if your pet experiences any severe side effects or complications with their prescription medications.
- Not all wounds are capable of being sutured closed. Abscesses, abrasions, punctures, and wounds in which care has been delayed will require healing via second intention or "opened" technique where the wound is kept clean until new tissue grows in, thus healing the wound.
- Depending on the nature and severity of your pet's wound, a drain tube may be used to facilitate healing.
- Drainage is a messy, but necessary side effect of the healing process.
- Keep the area around the drain tube clean by gently rinsing around the edges with clean water 1-2 times a day. Most drainage tubes are removed one week after placement.
- Applying a warm compress to the wound for 10 minutes at least 2-3 times daily will encourage healing. This can be accomplished by warming a clean wash cloth under warm, *not too hot* water. (The cloth should be as warm as you can tolerate on your own skin.) Hold the cloth over the wound until it cools. Repeat this process for 10 minutes.
- It's very important that your pet not be allowed to lick or chew at the wound, as this will cause further injury. For some pets it may be necessary to use an Elizabethan collar or "cone" to keep them from reaching the wound.
- If your pet typically lives outdoors, it may be necessary to keep them indoors or in a safe enclosed area through the duration of treatment for their wounds. This ensures ease of wound inspection, giving medications and cleanliness

### PROPER RESTRAINT

Your pet may still be slightly groggy from the anesthesia as he/she leaves the office. To prevent any injury, it is best to have your pet in a carrier or on a leash when leaving the Clinic. A carrier will ensure the safety of your pet and decrease any chance of injury during the ride home. Upon arriving home, provide a quiet area where your pet can fully recover over the next 12-24 hours.

### FOOD AND WATER

Your pet may have been fasted for his/her safety in preparation for general anesthesia and surgery. Because of this, he/she may want to eat upon returning home. It is best to wait 1-2 hours after arriving home before offering a small amount of food. Offer ½ a normal meal this evening. Normal meals can be resumed tomorrow morning.

### ELIMINATION

The gastrointestinal tract can be affected by sedation and anesthesia. This may result in your pet having soft stools or constipation for 24-36 hours following the general anesthesia and surgical procedure. Some pets may have bright red blood on their stools associated with stress. If any changes persist beyond 36 hours, please contact our office.

### EXERCISE AND ACTIVITY

Your pet is recovering from an injury, so remember to limit his/her activity as much as possible. We recommend you keep him/her confined to a small area during the recovery period. **Discourage jumping of any kind.** Jumping may cause wounds to open and may require surgery to repair the damage. Normal activity may be resumed in 7-10 days.

### SUTURES

If suture material was used to close the incision, the sutures will need to be removed in 10-14 days. You should check your pet's wound daily. Excessive swelling, redness or discharge should be reported immediately to our office. If your pet's wound begins to bleed or have colored discharge, call our office immediately. Some licking is expected; if your pet begins to lick or chew obsessively at the wound, we can provide you with a special collar to prevent complications.

### MONITOR

While we feel confident your pet will recover normally, there are risks associated with any episode of anesthesia. Call our office if you note any abnormalities over the next week. These include, but are not limited to:

- \*Loss of appetite for more than 2 days
- \*Refusal to drink water for more than 1 day
- \*Weakness or listlessness
- \*Vomiting

### PAIN MEDICATION

Begin administering your pet's pain medication tomorrow morning.

### QUESTIONS

**If you have any questions about your pet's follow-up care, please call our office immediately!**