A RECOVERY GUIDE FOR PET PARENTS

After your pet's spay or neuter

Your pet had general anesthesia and was spayed or neutered today. The next few weeks of healing depend a lot on what happens at home. Here's how to take care of them. Read it through, and call us if anything comes up.



01 PROTECTING THE INCISION

Biting or licking at the incision is the most common thing that goes wrong after surgery. Keeping it covered is the whole game.

Keep it covered
Your pet needs to wear a cone (E-collar) or a doughnut collar. This part isn't optional.

Suits work too
A recovery suit works in place of a cone when it fits the situation.

Don't block the bowl
Make sure your pet can still eat and drink with it on.

Check the fit
If they can reach the incision, the collar is too big. Call us and we'll swap it for the right size.

Supervise breaks
If you take the collar off so they can eat, put it back on as soon as they're done, and keep an eye on them the whole time it's off.

Refasten it right
When you put it back on, the tie shouldn't be too tight or too loose.

02 THE FIRST 2 TO 8 HOURS HOME

Anesthesia takes a while to wear off. During this window:

Keep them safe
Your pet may be wobbly and may have trouble holding their body temperature. Keep them indoors where you can watch them, away from temperature extremes, and away from stairs or furniture they could fall off of.

Ease back to food
Anesthesia plus an empty stomach can cause nausea. If your pet is fully awake when you get home, offer 1 to 3 tablespoons of food. If that stays down, give half their normal meal 1 to 2 hours later. They can drink water freely.

Give their meds
Give any medications we sent home, following the label.

Watch the incision
Watch the incision. A little blood or blood-tinged seepage is normal if it stops on its own. Call us about heavy bleeding, swelling, or discharge.

Restart usual meds
Restart any medications they were already on, plus any post-op medication labeled to start the same day.

03 THE DAYS AND WEEKS AFTER

- Go back to normal feeding and medications the next morning.
- No baths and no swimming until the skin heals (14 to 21 days).
- Keep exercise restricted. How long depends on the surgery:

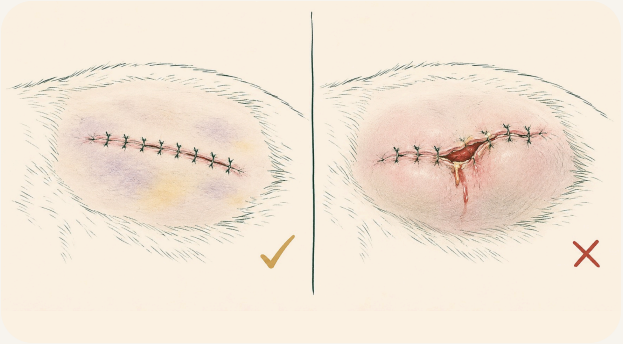
SPAYS AND ABDOMINAL CRYPTORCHID MALES

The skin heals within 21 days, but the abdominal wall takes 6 to 8 weeks to get back to full strength. For active pets, keep them in a small room or crate for the first two weeks. No hard running or jumping for up to 2 months.

NEUTERS (NON-CRYPTORCHID)

The skin heals within 10 to 14 days. No running or jumping until it does.

- Check the incision at least twice a day until it's healed. Mild to moderate bruising is normal. Call us if you see ongoing drainage or swelling.



NORMAL HEALING

- A little blood-tinged seepage
- Mild to moderate bruising

CALL US

- Incision pulling open
- Heavy bleeding
- Swelling
- Discharge

- Mild bleeding or seepage from the surgical site is normal on the day of the procedure and should decrease significantly overnight.
- If the area needs cleaning, wipe it gently with lukewarm water. A fragrance-free, sensitive-skin baby wipe may also be used to gently clean the surrounding area.
- Tell us if the incision opens at all.
- Book a recheck for 10 to 14 days after surgery. If there are skin sutures or staples, that's usually when they come out.

The hard part happens at home. We're here for all of it.

Anything looks off, or you're just not sure, call us. We'd always rather hear from you.

DURING NORMAL HOURS

Monday to Friday, 7:30 am to 5:30 pm
(210) 680-5243

AFTER HOURS

Thrive Pet Healthcare Specialists
(210) 822-2873