



## **Humane Society of Mason County After Care Instructions**

**If you are concerned that your pet is having problems related to their spay/neuter surgery:**

Please email [clinic@hsmcwa.org](mailto:clinic@hsmcwa.org) with your concerns and pictures showing the concerns. Veterinary staff do not monitor this email on Saturdays or Sundays. If you feel your pet needs to be seen urgently please reach out to your veterinarian or have them seen at an emergency veterinary clinic. HSMC is not responsible for these charges.

### **POST-SURGERY PICK UP ( \_\_\_\_\_ ):**

- Your pet will still be under the effects of the anesthetic medications when he/she goes home - they will be groggy, wobbly and may act differently (i.e. more aggressive or scared than usual) for 1-2 days
- Use extra caution when animals are using stairs, near furniture or are around other animals
- Do not let cats out of their carriers for 2 hours after they get home to allow the medications to wear off
- Place your animal in a quiet, warm (above 70°F) room with comfortable bedding when you get home

### **NO STRENUOUS ACTIVITY:**

- Your pet needs to take it easy for the next 10-14 days. Too much activity may cause the incision to open. Please make it your job to help them stay as calm and quiet as possible during the recovery period. If you think medication may be necessary to help keep them quiet, please ask HSMC staff.
- No running, jumping or playing. We recommend your animal stay in a small room or crate. Toys should be put away.
- Dogs may go for slow, leash walks - try to prevent them from pulling and keep them dry while outdoors

### **CLEAN, WARM & DRY:**

- The surgical area has been sealed with surgical glue which must stay dry. NO BATHS or water play for 10 days.
- Cats must stay indoors for 10 days; dogs must stay indoors for 10 days except to go outside ON A LEASH to use the bathroom.
- Pets must be transported inside the cab of your car or truck and NEVER in the bed of a truck.
- All pets will need to stay warmer than usual for 24 hours after surgery due to the anesthesia.

### **CHECK THE INCISION:**

- Check the incision as soon as you get home so you know what it should look like. Continue checking the incision twice each day to make sure it is healing properly.
- Incisions may look “rippled” due to a lay of stitches underneath the skin. This is part of the normal healing process.
- Abnormal incisions are those that appear red or swollen or have any discharge or foul odor coming from them - if you notice any of these signs or your pet refuses to eat or drink, please email [clinic@hsmcwa.org](mailto:clinic@hsmcwa.org) with a picture of the incision and what your concerns are.

### **NO LICKING:**

- Licking will eventually open the skin where it has been glued together and force bacteria inside, causing an infection.
- We recommend you purchase an E-collar (AKA cone) or pet surgical recovery suit and your pet should wear it at all times when you are not watching them for 7-10 days after surgery. Put the cone over their head, small end first. It should go past the end of their nose and be tied tight enough so you can only get two fingers under the tie. Your pet will not like wearing the cone. If they struggle at first, DO NOT PANIC and take it off. Give them a chance to adjust. You can use your pet’s own collar or harness to help keep it on.

## FOOD:

- Offer your pet ½ of a normal sized evening meal of their usual food when you get them home. Your pet may not feel like eating the first day home because anesthesia can cause nausea. Appetite and activity level should return to normal within 24-36 hours. If it does not, please contact [clinic@hsmcwa.org](mailto:clinic@hsmcwa.org) or see your family veterinarian.
- Do not change your pet's diet or give them a lot of treats or human food. Though it is tempting to spoil them after surgery, it is not good for them because it will likely cause stomach upset.

## TATTOO:

- There is a small, green line tattooed near the surgical incision site (for male cats on the abdomen) to show they have been spayed or neutered. Some green ink may have spread around on your pet's skin while they were in recovery. This excess ink will wear off and the tattoo will heal very quickly. The tattoo itself will last for life.

## PAIN MANAGEMENT:

- All animals receive an injection for pain and inflammation after surgery that will last 24 hours.
- **For dogs:** We send home a 3-day supply of pain medication. Begin giving the medication the morning after surgery, per the instructions on the label on the bottle. Always give this medication WITH FOOD.
- **For cats (females only):** We send home a 3-day supply of pain medication. Begin giving the medication the morning after surgery, per the instructions on the label on the baggie. Always give this medication WITH FOOD.
- **DO NOT** give your pet any over-the-counter medications such as Aspirin, Tylenol or Ibuprofen. **DO NOT** use any information you may find on the internet to dose and administer these medications to your pet yourself. Though some human medications are also used in animals, it is VERY DANGEROUS to give them to your pet after surgery and without the advice of a veterinarian.

## VACCINES:

- Pets receiving their first vaccination should receive a booster of the same vaccine in 3-4 weeks. This does not apply to the Rabies vaccine, which is effective for one year. We cannot do booster vaccines at our clinic, please see your regular veterinarian.
- Abnormal side effects to vaccination include vomiting, labored or trouble breathing, hives (small bumps) going down the back, swelling of the face, collapse or extreme lethargy. If you notice any of these signs, please call an emergency veterinary clinic (PSVSE in Gig Harbor at (253) 400-5052 or AESC in Poulsbo at (360) 697-7771)

## OTHER INFORMATION

*Please keep this sheet until your pet is completely healed.*

**Spay:** A complete ovariohysterectomy is performed. This is the surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus. An incision into the abdominal cavity is made located on the belly of your pet.

**Neuter:** The surgical removal of both testicles is performed. The scrotum/skin is NOT removed. An incision is made either just in front of the scrotum, or for younger dogs and all male cats, in the scrotum (there may be an abdominal or other skin incision for cryptorchid neuters).

## Please note:

- *Your pet does not need to return to our clinic if they are healing normally.*
- *We cannot see pets that have had surgery at our clinic for medical issues not directly related to their spay/neuter surgery*
- *We cannot see any pets that have not had surgery at our clinic.*

**Thank you for trusting the Humane Society for Mason County to care for your pet.**