

## Pre/Post Operation

### Cutting through all the information

Due to illness, disease or trauma, your pet may one day require surgery. While always stressful (for both you and your pet) there are a few basic guidelines that you can follow that will make the process as complication-free as possible and put your pet on the fast road to recovery.

Depending on the type of surgery, whether minor or major, your veterinarian will advise you when your pet can resume his or her normal lifestyle.



### Pre-surgical instructions

- Your veterinarian will do a check-up on your pet before the surgery to determine if there are any pre-existing conditions that may interfere with the surgical procedure.
- Make sure your pet is current on his or her vaccinations.
- Your veterinarian may suggest a blood test to screen for disease not apparent from a physical exam.
- You may need to administer antibiotics several days prior to major surgery to increase your pet's ability to fight off infection.
- Your veterinarian will tell you when to withhold water and food prior to an operation.

### Post-surgical instructions

- Chances are your pet will be weak or groggy after surgery. Do not let him or her get too excited.
  - Restrain your animal with a leash or put him in a carrier when leaving the hospital. This will protect him from additional injury.
  - Provide only small amounts of food and water until he or she readjusts to being at home and is recovering. Too much food and water can lead to an upset stomach or vomiting.
  - If a special post-surgical diet has been prescribed, follow all instructions carefully. Limit your pet's exercise. Climbing stairs, jumping or running may open up sutures or cause nausea.
  - Make sure his or her sleeping area is clean, warm and free of drafts.
  - Your veterinarian may prescribe medication to administer during your pet's recovery. Follow all label instructions carefully.
  - Sutures are usually removed approximately 10 days after surgery. Check the area around the incision daily for redness, swelling or drainage. If you detect any irritation, contact your veterinarian immediately.
  - Try to keep your pet from licking or chewing on the wound. If this is difficult to do, you might want to provide a physical barrier by placing an "Elizabethan collar" around his head.
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