

POST OPERATIVE CARE – NEUTERED CATS

You have just collected your cat after it has been neutered here at Walker Green Veterinary Surgery. The nurse should have gone through all the details and instructions that you need to know after the procedure. We appreciate that it is sometimes difficult to remember all the information you have been given and we have therefore also provided you with post operative instructions that you can refer back to now that you have left the surgery.

What is neutering?

Neutering is an operation where we make sure that your cat cannot breed and their sexual drive is removed or at the very least, greatly reduced.

In females, this involves removing the womb and ovaries (cat spay), in males the testicles are removed (castration).

Feeding for this evening

In most cases, we have already offered your cat some food after they have recovered from their anaesthetic. We believe that by feeding your pet as soon as they have come round is the best way to get them feeling a little more alert and less groggy! After all, it was 10pm yesterday evening since they last ate.... We do also suggest that you offer them a small meal this evening although you may want to reduce the portion size so as not to over feed them after surgery. Your cat may vomit after eating, this is sometimes an after effect of the anaesthetic and if this occurs you should take away any remaining food and not attempt to feed them again until the following morning.

Water should be offered as soon as your cat gets home, but again, be aware that too much may cause vomiting so only small amounts to be in the bowl at any one time, but do top the water up frequently.

Restricting exercise after the procedure

When your cat returns home you may notice that they will be quiet and reserved one minute and then incredibly lively the next. This is often due to small amounts of the anaesthetic remaining in their system. We advise that you keep your cat indoors for 24 hours after the procedure to make sure that they have recovered before returning outdoors.

However, if you have had a female cat spayed we recommend that they are kept indoors for the next 10 days or until their stitches are removed. Cats like to climb and get up to all sorts of mischief when they are outdoors, do not forget that your cat has actually had a large procedure and will need to recover. If they do too much it can greatly increase their healing time or may even cause the wound to break down, which in turn, may lead to more surgery and extra costs!

If your cat is used to going to the toilet outside then you must provide them with a litter tray whilst they are kept inside after surgery. If you have a male cat that has had a castration procedure then please provide them with shredded paper in the litter tray rather than cat litter. This is because we do not stitch a cat castration wound. We do not want to encourage any small pieces of cat litter to get stuck or enter into the wound, which may cause infection or discomfort if it occurs.

We may have provided your cat with an Elizabethan collar to stop them licking or chewing at their wound, please make sure that this is kept on at all times. If your cat does interfere with the wound, again, you may be looking at more surgery and unnecessary extra costs if the wound begins to break down. Please make sure that your cat is provided with a collar they **must** stay indoors. It is very dangerous to allow a cat out whilst wearing a collar.

Wound aftercare

Following the procedure your cat will have a surgical wound, usually no longer than a couple of inches. Female cats are usually spayed on their flank (the left side of their abdomen) and males have two open incisions (cuts) in their scrotum (the sac that contains the testicles). It is important that the wound is checked daily to make sure it looks ok, if the wound has wept slightly you may want to bathe it gently with some warm water and cotton wool. Please do not apply anything else to the wound unless you are asked to do so, some products can be too much for your dog and cause more harm than good.

Make sure that your cat does not interfere with the wound, as this will dramatically delay healing. As mentioned above, if when you return home your cat is starting to lick or chew at the wound please contact the surgery and we can arrange an Elizabethan collar if needed.

If you are concerned that the wound is swollen or reddened then please contact the surgery as we are likely to want to see your cat back sooner than the original check up appointment made.

Follow up appointments

By now you should already have a follow up appointment booked with the nurse to check on the wound, but if this has not been arranged please contact the surgery.

In the case of female cats that have been spayed we usually like to see patients back 2-3 days following surgery for an initial check and then again at 10-14 days post operatively depending on what the nurse advised. If external stitches have been used, they are usually removed at this 2nd check.

Hopefully, we have covered any questions you have regarding your cats operation, but please feel free to contact the surgery if you have any more queries.