

## **Post-Operative Care**

Your cat has just undergone surgery. While welcoming him home, there are some things to remember to assure a speedy recovery.

### **Anesthesia**

Your cat may not feel himself for the next 12 to 24 hours. Keep him in a warm, quiet area, away from other pets, where he can rest and is not likely to injure himself. An airline kennel or a small room is ideal.

Never feed or give water to a cat that still seems groggy. Once your cat seems awake and alert, take things slow. Some anesthetics can cause nausea. Introduce water first. If all goes well, a small amount of food can be offered a few hours later. Wait until tomorrow to return to his normal feeding schedule.

### **Exercise**

Your cat should be kept quiet today. For the next week, his activity should be moderately restricted. It can be difficult to keep a rambunctious cat calm, but do not encourage vigorous running, jumping, or rough play. Restrict him from areas where you know he likes to climb and jump, and avoid leaving him unattended with other pets with whom he normally rough-houses. Excessive exercise after surgery can cause swelling and delayed healing.

Some surgeries require more severe restriction or specific types of exercise. Be sure you understand your veterinarians instructions, and follow them diligently.

### **Environment and Grooming**

Keep your cat inside today and tonight, even if he is normally allowed outdoors. It is unsafe for him to be out around cars and other hazards if he is still feeling the effects of anesthesia. If its at all possible, it is better to keep him in for a few days to a week. This will help him stay clean, and can help minimize excessive physical activity.

Make sure your cats bedding and the area where he lives are especially clean and dry. Your veterinarian may recommend a soft, shredded paper cat litter.

If the area around his incision appears soiled, you can carefully wipe his skin with warm water and a mild antiseptic soap, then rinse by wiping with plain water. Avoid getting soap or water directly on the incision.

### **Self-Trauma**

A surgical incision may feel sore, itchy, or just different to your cat. His natural instinct is to lick, scratch or chew. If you notice him bothering his incision, ask your veterinarian if he might need an Elizabethan collar. The Elizabethan collar should be worn at all times when you are not watching him its amazing how quickly a cat can pull out a stitch when you turn your back.

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### **Monitoring**

Check your cats incision daily. Notify your veterinarian if you see any increase in swelling, discharge, bleeding, redness, or if you think stitches might be missing.

If your cat has a cast or bandage, check it daily to be sure its dry, clean, and has no foul odor.

### **Medications**

If your cat has medication, thoroughly read and follow all label instructions. If you have any questions, your veterinary office can help. Always use the medication for the full duration prescribed, even if your cat seems better sooner.

### **Getting Help**

Never hesitate to call your veterinarian or local veterinary emergency clinic if you think you cat may be having a problem. Your diligence may catch a complication before it becomes serious.

