

POST OPERATIVE CARE – NEUTERED DOGS

You have just collected your dog 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 dog cannot breed and their sexual drive is removed or at the very least, greatly reduced.

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

Feeding for this evening

In most cases, we have already offered your dog 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 dog 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 dog 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.

Exercise after the procedure

Modern anaesthetic techniques mean that dogs are often just as lively then they are discharged as they are when they arrived at the surgery in the morning. This occasionally lures owners into a false sense of security and you may think your dog feels better than they actually are! Remember that they have had a general anaesthetic and it is normal that they will not be 100%. We therefore advise owners to be careful that evening and only allow your dog to go out in the garden to the toilet and not take them for a walk.

The morning after the operation you may begin to take your dog for walks again, although be advised that any walks for the next 10-14 days are **lead walks only** and for no more than 20 minutes at any one time. This is to allow your dog to recover from surgery and we don't

want the risk of a wound becoming swollen or of herniation occurring if your dog does too much!

If your dog is female and has been spayed you are also advised to avoid allowing them to go up and down stairs and avoid jumping onto objects, for example – in and out of cars or up onto the couch or bed.

Wound aftercare

Following the procedure your dog will have a surgical wound, usually no longer than 3 inches, on the underside of their abdomen, for a male dog this wound is between the base of the penis and the scrotum and for female dogs just behind the belly button. 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 dog does not interfere with the wound, as this will dramatically delay healing and in some cases may cause wound infection or breakdown. A member of staff should have recommended a collar but if you find that your dog is licking the wound at home please contact the surgery and arrange to collect one.

If you are concerned that the wound is perhaps swollen or reddened then please contact the surgery as we are likely to want to see your dog 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. 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 has 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 dog's care after a neutering operation, but if you are at all concerned or have any other queries that have not been covered, then please do not hesitate to contact us at the surgery. A veterinary surgeon or nurse will be more than happy to answer your questions.