

# A Pet Parent's Guide to Post-Op Care

Your pet has just come home after surgery. While this can be a difficult and stressful time for both of you, it's important to understand your pet's needs, symptoms to look out for, and how to help them.

This guide will help you provide a safe and healthy recovery for your pet.

## What to Expect:

Your pet may not act like themselves for a few hours after surgery while the anesthesia fully wears off. You may also notice:

- A cough from the breathing tube placed in their throat during surgery that can cause irritation.
- Sleepiness, from the sedatives used during surgery. These typically wear off in one or two days.
- Bruising around the surgical site, along with a small amount of blood.

While these are all normal reactions to sedatives and surgery, call your veterinarian if you're concerned.

## How Do I Manage Their Post-Op Pain?

Your vet will prescribe medications to keep your pet comfortable. These may include pain medications, antibiotics, and possibly anti-anxiety meds if your pet is anxious after surgery.

They will advise you on dosage, how to administer medications, and how often to give it.

Make sure to follow all your vet's instructions. Please ask your vet if you are unsure of any instruction given.

**Don't give your pet any medication or supplement that wasn't approved by your vet first. Human pain medications may be toxic to pets.**



## How Do I Care for My Pet's Incision and Stitches?

Making sure your pet does not bite, lick, or chew on their stitches and surgical site is key to a speedy and good recovery. Your vet may recommend a recovery cone or a surgical suit. Prevent your pet's bandages from getting wet as well.

## When Will Their Stitches Be Removed?

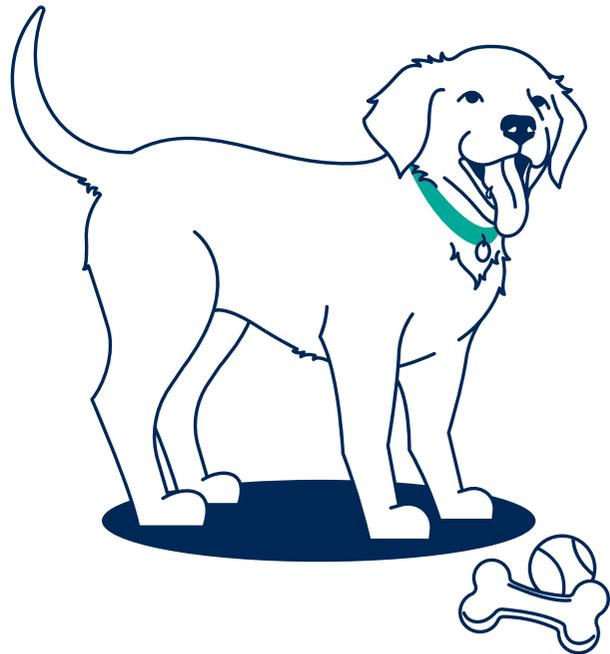
Your vet may have used dissolvable sutures, which do not need to be removed. However, if stitches were used, they will typically be removed 10 to 14 days post-op.

## When (and What) Should I Feed Them in Recovery?

Provide fresh water regularly—don't restrict your pet's water intake after surgery.

For food, you can offer your pet half a portion of their regular meal at dinnertime. This is to limit the risk of nausea and vomiting.

However, if your pet asks for more food or appears to still be hungry, you can offer them the rest of their dinner one to two hours later.



## How Long Will It Take for Them to Recover?

Recovery time depends on the surgery they had.

Soft tissue surgeries, such as spaying or neutering, have an estimated recovery time of 10 to 14 days. Once their stitches come out, your pet can resume their normal activities.

However, if their surgery involved bones, ligaments, or joints, they may have a longer recovery period of two or three months.

Call your vet if your pet is chewing or licking their stitches, is lethargic, isn't eating or drinking, or is showing other concerning symptoms.