

## Post-operative Information: Intestinal Surgery

Your pet has had surgery performed on the intestines to remove abnormal tissue or an abnormal object. The intestines are very fragile structures and healing of the internal incisions can be compromised or delayed, resulting in leakage of intestinal contents. The majority of patients recover rapidly and without complication, but careful monitoring is essential to catching any early signs of complications. Longterm, patients rarely have problems associated with intestinal surgery; appetite and activity will likely return to pre-operative levels within 2-4 weeks.

### ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS

- Please keep your pet in a comfortable, safe indoor location without free access to stairs for the next 24 hours as he/she recovers from anesthesia and surgery.
- Your pet may be groggy for the next few days. He or she may whine or appear more anxious than usual; this may indicate pain/discomfort or side-effects of the medications. Please call your veterinarian for assistance with medication adjustments or return for exam and additional pain medications as needed.
- Avoid any rigorous activity for 2 weeks. Short, leashed walks are fine.
- Monitor appetite and attitude. *If both do not steadily improve over the next 2-3 days*, please call your primary care veterinarian or return for progress evaluation and problem-solving.
- You can expect your pet to have a bowel movement within 5 days. Some animals take longer than others depending on when they last ate prior to surgery and when they started eating after surgery. It may be abnormal in color (black, red, green) and consistency for 2-3 days. If you have any concerns, please speak with your primary care veterinarian.
- Please confirm that your pet has urinated within 24 hours of returning home. If he/she does not, or you notice any problems related to urination, please speak with your primary care veterinarian.

### INCISION CARE

- Please look at the incision on your pet's abdomen twice daily. It should be dry, slightly red along the margins, and slightly swollen/thick on the edges. Over several days, it should lose redness and swelling.
- Problems to call your veterinarian about:
  - gapping (the edges should be exactly touching)
  - discharge (other than small amount of crusting)
  - swelling (other than slightly raised skin near edges).Some bruising is normal and will resolve in 5-7 days.
- Do not allow your pet to lick or chew the incision. Pets tend to want to lick early in the healing period and this can compromise the incision and predispose to infection. If necessary, please use an E-collar if you must leave your pet unattended.

#### TESTS PENDING

- If there were any tissues removed for biopsy analysis, they will be submitted and results will be available in 5-7 days. Your veterinarian will contact you with test results and will make any treatment changes as needed.

#### PROGRESS EXAMS

- Please return to your primary care veterinarian in 10-14 days for a progress exam. Skin healing will be evaluated, sutures (if present) will be removed, and any questions you have will be addressed.

#### LONGTERM LIFESTYLE

- The majority of animals having had intestinal surgery will have no longterm side-effects. Always advise any veterinary professional that your pet has had intestinal surgery should you pet become ill for any reason in the future.