

## Enucleation (eye removal surgery)



One of the most useful and efficient ways to convey information to you about your pet is via the written word. We carefully craft these notes to give you helpful information and accurate expectations around your pet's surgical experience.

**Please read this.** *Please save it and read it during each stage of the recovery process.* Surprises make for a stressful time for everyone.

Photo and video examples may be found on our website: [www.directvetsurg.com](http://www.directvetsurg.com) in the Pet Owner Portal under "DVS Resources".

Your pet has had the globe (ie. eyeball) removed due to serious injury, terminal glaucoma or globe tumor. This involved removing all tissue that support the eye and final closure of the skin to permanently seal the eye socket. Once healed, there will be a small depression in the area and scar along the previous eyelid margins.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Please keep a note of your questions as you and your pet progress thru recovery and address them to your primary care veterinary team. Our surgery group will contact your primary care team on **Day 2** (after their phone follow-up with you) and **Day 14** (after your recheck visit with them) to check in on your pet's progress and see if you have had any concerns or questions. This method will maintain continuity in care and an accurate patient medical record.

### First few days postop

#### MONITORING

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 primary care veterinary team for assistance with medication adjustments or return for exam and additional pain medications as needed.

Monitor appetite and attitude. *If both do not steadily improve over the next 2-3 days*, please call your primary care veterinary team 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 and consistency for 2-3 days. If you have any concerns, please speak with your primary care veterinary team.

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 veterinary team.

## MEDICATIONS

It is likely that you have been prescribed one or more medications (given by mouth) for your pet over the first 2-3wks of recovery. During the discharge appointment or shortly thereafter, please make sure you understand:

- what each medication is being used to treat,
- what side-effects may develop, and
- whether or not the medication should be refilled and continued.

## BANDAGE CARE (IF PRESENT)

A clear, plastic bandaid may have been applied to the incision (Tegaderm). This will protect the incision from infection from the environment and a wayward pet tongue! It is useful for up to 7-10 days. You may remove it like a "bandaid" at any time. If it is hard to peel off, waiting longer may make for easier removal. There is no urgency in taking it off.

## ***Week 1-2 postop***

### MONITORING

Please look at the incision twice daily. It should be dry, slightly red along the margins, slightly swollen/thick on the edges with a light crust down the center. Over several days, it should lose redness and swelling.

Problems to call your veterinarian about:

- gapping (the edges should be exactly touching)
- ongoing or new 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.

The occasional patient will have more extensive bruising and/or swelling on day 2-3. If this develops, please let your primary care veterinarian know; a visit or sending photos will help them characterize the issue and decide on a course of action. The vast majority of the time, this is a transient issue that will follow a typical 5-7 day course resolving.

Do not allow your pet to scratch the incision; this can compromise the incision and predispose to infection. If necessary, please prevent access to the incision by using creative clothing options (ex. Soft booties on the paws), an E-collar or other devices, if you must leave your pet unattended. See [www.directvetsurg.com](http://www.directvetsurg.com), Pet Owner portal→Pet Links and DVS Resources

Closely supervise your pet's movements over the first 3-4 days when s/he will be groggy from anesthetics and pain medications. Limit activities to necessary events only (on leash/out to go to the bathroom; access to food/water.)

#### TEST PENDING

If there were any samples removed for testing, they will be submitted and results usually will be available in 5-7 days. Your primary care team will contact you with test results and make any treatment changes as needed.

#### PROGRESS EXAMS

Please return to your primary care clinic 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.

#### RESTRICTIONS

Avoid any rigorous activity for 4 weeks as your pet adapts to impaired/altered vision. They will need to adjust to limited peripheral vision on the operated side, and may bump into things until they adapt. For dogs, short, leashed walks to urinate/defecate are fine. Minimal, supervised/assisted access to stairs is advised during restricted period. Use baby gates, etc. to prevent free access to stairs during this restricted period. When navigating stairs (up and down), have a hand/leash on collar/harness to prevent slips, stumbles, falls.

Please use a short (~6ft), hand-held leash when outside to urinate/defecate. Confine your pet to a small area/room/crate when unattended. Please do not allow your pet to run, jump or play during this restriction period.

## Longterm lifestyle

There are no long-term restrictions to activity after enucleation. Monitor your pet's abilities in different environments, since their impaired peripheral vision may compromise their mobility and interactions with other animals. Facial changes can be especially difficult when dogs meet and greet each other; accommodate for this with close supervision in these situations.

The surgery site/scar should remain quiet, lifelong. If you notice any changes in the area, please visit with your veterinarian for evaluation.

### Checklist:

#### HOME MONITORING AND PROGRESS CHECK-IN WITH VETERINARY TEAM

- ☐ Pet attitude and appetite—Are these improving daily? What are your observations? What are your specific concerns?
- ☐ Pet mobility—Is this improving daily? What are your observations? What are your specific concerns?
- ☐ Incision health—Is redness and swelling going away? Is there discharge or moisture? (Photos taken close-up and at different angles are helpful for your primary care veterinary team,)
- ☐ Pet pain level—What are your observations? What are your specific concerns?
- ☐ Other

Based on your own experience through this, we welcome and encourage suggestions to this information that may help future patients and their people. Pay it forward!

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--The DVS Crew