

Facial fold/nasal fold resection



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 for some conditions may be found on our website: www.directvetsurg.com in the Pet Owner Portal under "DVS Resources".

Your pet has had surgery to either remove excess skin folds about the face and lips or remove nose folds to widen nostrils. The goal of the facial fold surgery is to remove excess skin that is creating deep skin infections and pain. The goal of the nasal fold surgery is to widen the nostrils for easier breathing. The face will have a different, smoother appearance; please set your expectations for this change. These surgery sites are exposed to very high bacterial numbers given the close association with the mouth and nose and/or the deep infected skin pockets created by the deep folds. Careful attention to postoperative healing and prompt veterinary review of potential healing problems are essential to a successful outcome.

First few days postop

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.

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.

Please look at the incision(s) when you get home; knowing what “normal” looks like is helpful later when trying to understand if the incision is healing abnormally. Photos are helpful for you and us, when communicating from a distance.

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.

Week 1-2 postop

INCISIONS

Please look at the incision(s) 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 (photos are helpful during discussions):

- 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.

Do not allow your pet to rub or paw the incision(s). Pets tend to want to paw at the site early in the healing period and rub their face on the ground/furniture later in the healing period; this can compromise the incision and predispose to infection. If necessary, please prevent access to the incision by using an E-collar or other devices, if you must leave your pet unattended.

Most animals are very bothered by any manipulation of these areas. It may be helpful to maintain cleanliness and ease pain and itchiness during the healing phase to treat the incision areas with light cleaning (moist washcloth, no soap); blot and dab to clean away eye discharge, food particles, etc. Gently blot the area dry with a clean towel after the treatment. Avoid products, cleansers, premoistened wipes that have strong fragrance or chemicals that may irritate or burn the incision.

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 2 weeks. For dogs, short, leashed walks to urinate/defecate are fine.

Minimal, supervised/assisted access to stairs is recommended while your pet is taking pain medications. 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 and ideally a sling/strap under the belly 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.

If your pet's personality-type challenges these restrictions, discuss options for medicinal-assistance for your pet to make restrictions easier to manage (i.e. Trazadone, Gabapentin, Tramadol, other).

Long-term lifestyle

There are no typical longterm lifestyle accommodations needed following facial fold or nasal fold resection. Most commonly, the skin infection treatments in this area will be eliminated from your pet's routine and nasal breathing will be easier and quieter.

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! *(Send editorial suggestions to: directvetsurg@gmail.com)*

--The DVS Crew