

Monitoring your pet's postoperative progress at home

ANIMALS DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHAT IS GOOD FOR THEM.

They want to be with you, play with the kids, chase the squirrels, bark at the mailman. After the first few days, your pet will start acting more and more like him/herself again. Depending on the surgical procedure, your pet will still need assistance in certain circumstances. Please understand it is OK for your pet to want to rest, and it is wise of you to enforce that rest according to instructions. Rarely are rambunctious activities OK for many weeks after a surgery procedure.

We will provide instructions for medications, expectations, and recommended restrictions. You know your pet best, though, so try hard to predict what can go wrong in your particular setting and with your pet's particular personality!

CHECK IN WITH YOUR PRIMARY CARE VETERINARY TEAM

Typically, your first postoperative evaluation will be in two weeks with your primary care veterinary team. The incision will be evaluated for proper healing and any signs of problems. This is an excellent time to revisit your instructions and ask questions about moving forward. Physical therapy, upcoming tests, and problems to watch for, are all topics to refresh during this first recheck exam at your home clinic.

Direct Veterinary Surgery will coordinate with your primary care veterinary team to make the postoperative monitoring and advice efficient and accurate while maintaining a continuity-of-care appreciated by everyone. Your pet's medical records will stay up to date, and you can minimize travel for you and your pet.

FOLLOW-UP EVALUATIONS AND TESTS ARE NECESSARY FOR OPTIMAL OUTCOME

As the weeks pass, you will settle into a more normal routine with your pet. Monitoring your pet, relative to the expectations we have laid out for you, is important. If instructions say your pet will be "using the operated leg every step with a moderate limp" by week four, and instead our pet is holding his/her leg up 100% of the time at week four, your pet needs to be evaluated. Catching problems early is so much better than finding them months down the road. Check in with your primary care veterinary team.

Diagnostic tests, such as x-rays or bloodwork, are often critical to confirm appropriate healing or recovery. We use this information to better advise you about your pet's return to unrestricted activities or the need for additional medications or treatment. Stick to the prescribed schedule with your primary care veterinary team for optimal continuity-of-care. Results of tests that need additional interpretation will be sent to *Direct Veterinary Surgery* for review.

For additional resources, see: www.directvetsurg.com