

## Post-Surgical expectations



\_\_\_\_\_ had a surgery today for \_\_\_\_\_

In the following month, the surgical incision will be undergoing healing process. We would like you to take a minute to read the following information and instructions.

The healing process starts directly after the surgery, both sides of the wounds edges were mechanically put together by a surgical suture or staples for alignment to allow proper healing.

After surgery, we should expect some mild swelling, redness in the skin, and pain at the surgical incision site. In the following 2-3 days, we expect to see moderate swelling and redness of the skin. These signs usually start resolving in the following 3-7 days. Cold compress can be utilized to help reduce the swelling and pain in the first 2 days.

Sometimes, bleeding under the skin can occur due to cutting into small blood vessels under the skin during placing the sutures. This is an undesirable side effect, and it tends to heal within a week to ten days.

In some other situations, increased activity level can cause increased blood flow in the incision area and blood, or the serum - the liquid part of the blood- can collect under the incision area. This pocket of fluid is known as hematoma (in case of blood) or seroma (in case of serum). This pocket of fluid can start oozing/draining out from the incision or the sutures placement sites. This can cause a delay in the healing process plus it can have undesirable appearance of a swelling at the incision area. If this condition develops, drainage of the fluids (by a VETERINARIAN) and adding an antibiotic (to prevent infection) can help resolve it.

To prevent licking or scratching the incision area, an Elizabethan collar should be used. This collar should be used around the clock until sutures are removed. We strongly advice against removing the e-collar before suture removal. A soft inflatable collar can be used if the surgical incision is on the chest or abdomen. If your pet had a mass removed from a limb, a hard collar should be used, as your pet will still be able to lick the incision area if they bring their limb forward towards the head.

In the case that your pet removed the sutures in the first 1-2 days, the wound should be inspected and new sutures should be placed. In some cases, if the wound gets a deep infection or there is not enough skin to allow primary closure, the surgical incision will be managed as an open wound which will require bandaging with daily inspection and change of the bandage (by a VETERINARIAN).

In the first two weeks, bathing or swimming should be completely prohibited. Once the sutures are removed, please allow another 2-5 days before considering bathing or grooming.

Infection, wound contamination and failure of wound closure (dehiscence) should be also taken in consideration with any surgical incision. That's why we recommend keeping your pet indoor, in clean dry environment. Daily inspection of the surgical area is highly recommended.

Please do not hesitate to call us with any updates or questions if you notice any changes (drainage, wound opening, bruising, excessive swelling or odor)

Thank you for choosing Pet Doctor and trusting us with your pet's health. We hope that your pet will continue to have uneventful recovery in the next few weeks.