

## HELPING PAW POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### **What to expect now that you have dropped off your pet:**

- We have many procedures today and will give every patient the highest level of care and attention.
- When your pet is awake and stable and ready to go home, we will call you.
- If you need to reach us, please call 516-574-0909- please only call if necessary, as we are busy working on your pet and others. We promise to call you when your pet can be picked up.
- Please pick your pet up within one hour of being called. There will be a charge for late pick-ups.

### **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. There are typically no stitches/sutures or staples that need to be removed. The suture material used is absorbable and the stitches are under the skin (unless we have informed you otherwise).
2. After arriving home today, please keep your pet in its carrier or in a small, confined space for 3-4 hours. After 3-4 hours, keep your pet in a quiet, small place such as a bathroom overnight so you can best observe and keep them quiet. At that time provide a litter box for cats, and food and water for dogs and cats.
3. You can feed your pet his or her normal meal if they are wide awake, alert and hungry. You can give any prescribed medications at that time as well, if appropriate.
4. No running, jumping, playing, swimming or other strenuous activity for 7 days. Keep your pet quiet. Pets must be kept indoors where they can stay clean, dry and warm. No baths for one week during the recovery period. Dogs must be walked on a leash and cats kept indoors.
5. Check the incision site twice daily. There should be no drainage. Redness and swelling should be minimal. **Do not allow your pet to lick or chew at the incision.** If this occurs, an Elizabethan collar MUST be applied to prevent it. The number one complication we see is from licking the incision. Complications as a result of that will be your financial responsibility. We strongly recommend getting a collar from us today or from a local pet store.
6. Appetite should return gradually within 24 hours of surgery. Lethargy lasting for more than 24 hours post-op, diarrhea or vomiting are not normal and your pet should be taken to your regular veterinarian. Dogs may have a slight cough for a few days after surgery.
7. Do not change your pet's diet at this time and do not give junk food, table scraps, milk or any other people food during the recovery period. This could mask post-surgical complications.
8. We recommend your pet receive a post-operative examination with your regular veterinarian 7 to 10 days after surgery. Have the incision checked for complete healing and to discuss additional needs, follow-up care and vaccination boosters.
9. **If there are any questions or concerns directly related to the surgery during the recovery period, please call this office at (516)-655-8720. If there is an emergency after hours, contact your regular veterinarian or the closest emergency hospital.**
10. **THE MOST COMMON COMPLICATION HAPPENS WHEN PET'S LICK THEIR INCISIONS!** This is preventable by using the correct sized Elizabethan collar- we will provide one for you at an additional fee. If you get one elsewhere, you must be sure it is properly fitted. We cannot be responsible for self-trauma by the pet if the wrong sized collar does not work. This can be a costly and dangerous problem. Please allow us to help you pick the correct size.
11. **HELPING PAW will treat at a designated location, at minimal cost, any post-op complications resulting directly from the surgery, if the above post-op instructions are followed in full.** Your regular veterinarian must address illnesses or injuries that are not a direct result of surgery. Please call for an appointment as soon as you see cause for concern. We cannot be held responsible for complications resulting from failure to follow post-op instructions or for contagious diseases for which the animal was not previously properly vaccinated.