



SMOKY'S SPAY & NEUTER CLINIC

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

A cat will have only partially recovered from anesthesia at the time of discharge since full recovery may take approximately 24 hours. A caretaker must monitor the cat to provide appropriate post-operative care.

All unowned, free-roaming community cats receive:

- Anesthesia
- Spay or neuter surgery
- Rabies vaccine
- Ivermectin de-wormer injection
- Injectable pain medication
- Left ear crop

Smoky's Spay & Neuter Clinic personnel will discuss any health issue specific to a community cat who was brought by you for surgery.

Cats will be recovering from anesthesia. Normal behaviors include the following:

- Deep sleep
- Head bobbing
- Wobbly movements
- Fast breathing that improves as they calm and anesthesia wears off
- Shivering

Cats displaying any of the behaviors below should not be released:

- Bleeding from the surgery site
- Bleeding from the left ear crop

Recommendations:

- Keep a cat in his trap until released.

- Cats may be groggy and need to sleep overnight. Keep cats warm, covered and in a quiet and protected area. Do not leave trapped cats outdoors in an unprotected area. Cats are susceptible to heat and cold while recovering from anesthesia.

- In the winter months, try to provide a heat source (heat lamps, a space heater, etc.), being careful not to allow the cats to become overheated. If no heat source is available, cover the cats with layers of blankets, being sure to leave an adequate air passage.

- Do not transfer the cats to a carrier or other cage unless they are going to be held there for more than 48 hours.

- It is okay to give a small amount of food and water to the community cat(s) on the evening after surgery unless the cat still appears sedated since cats may spill the water, fall asleep in the water or vomit if fed. Cats can receive food and water in the trap the next morning when they are fully awake.

- Visually monitor cats frequently. Complications can occur and prompt steps may be necessary to aid in the cats' recovery. Check points include:

- Incision site: There should be no bleeding, excessive redness or swelling. On females, the incision should be closed.
- Cropped ear: There should be no bleeding.
- Alertness: You should observe gradual improvement throughout the evening with complete alertness by the following morning.

We do not offer Elizabethan collars for community cats since this can pose a safety threat to them while in the trap and also after release.

PLEASE NOTE: Recently neutered male cats can appear un-neutered/intact for weeks after surgery. If after a few weeks you are concerned, please reach out directly to us or your primary care veterinarian.

If you have any concerns about the recovery of a cat from the time of discharge until return to the outdoor environment, please contact Smoky's Spay & Neuter Clinic at 804-368-6232 or email communitycats@richdmonspca.org between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. We are closed on Fridays and weekends.

However, if you have any urgent medical concerns or after-hours emergency, please contact a local emergency care facility. Please be advised that we are not in a position to reimburse for outside veterinary services.

Please seek veterinary evaluation immediately if you notice any of the following:

- Vomiting after the first 24 hours
- Persistent diarrhea
- Discharge or bleeding from the incision
- Difficulty urinating or defecating
- Labored breathing
- Severe discomfort, depression or weakness

Local emergency care facilities include:

Virginia Veterinary Center (VVC) Richmond
3312 W. Cary Street
Richmond, VA 23221
804-353-9000

Bluepearl (Dogwood) Pet Hospital
5918 W. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230
804-716-4700

Partner Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center
1616 Three Chopt Rd
Henrico, VA 23233
804-206-9122

Veterinary Referral & Critical Care
1596 Hockett Road
Manakin-Sabot, VA 23103
804-784-8722

Animal Medical Center
13821 Fribble Way
Midlothian, Va 23112
804-639-3900

Local urgent care facilities:

Better Pet Veterinary Urgent Care
7138 Mechanicsville Turnpike
Mechanicsville, VA 23111
(804) 442-2713

Partner Veterinary Urgent Care (Same location as above)
1616 Three Chopt Rd
Henrico, VA 23233
804-206-9122

UrgentVet- Midlothian
14300 Winterview Pkwy
Midlothian, VA
804-924-0404

UrgentVet- Carytown
3531 Ellwood Ave
Richmond, VA 23221
804-362-0202

UrgentVet- Short Pump
11521 W Broad St
Henrico, Va 23233
804-533-7733

RETURN INSTRUCTIONS

If the cats are fully awake the next day, they may be returned to their colonies unless given other instructions by the veterinarian.

If cats do not seem to be recovering from surgery, consider having them immediately examined by a veterinarian before returning them to their outdoor colonies.

When ready for release, return the cats to the area where they were originally trapped. Release in a direction that does not encourage the cats to run into danger (such as a busy street).

Keep the traps covered, and simply hold the trap with the release door facing away from you and open the door. The cat will probably bolt immediately out of the trap. If the cat appears confused, tilt the back of the trap up and tap on the top to encourage the cat to leave.

Never put your hand in the trap.

We generally recommend against relocating unowned, free-roaming community cats. In most cases, the relocated cats will disappear, either being driven off by territorial cats or other animals in the area or follow their intense, natural instinct to return “home,” resulting in death along the way.

Have food and water available at the time of release in case the cats have not eaten since being trapped before surgery.

If using a Richmond SPCA trap, please clean the trap with a household cleaner or disinfectant and rinse well before returning the trap to the Richmond SPCA.