

Animal Surgical Care of Michigan, PLLC

Phone: 269-312-4227

surgeon@animalsurgicalcaremi.com

What to expect after a major surgery

1. Your pet may be disoriented as he or she recovers from anesthesia. Putting your dog or cat in a crate or blocking your pet in a small room or area of a room will help keep them safe until they are fully recovered. Make sure that they are prevented from stumbling down stairs and that they have good traction carpeting to walk on. Your dog may even need help with a sling or towel to get outside, especially the first night after a limb surgery; cats should have easy access to their litter boxes. Some pets may not be completely recovered from anesthesia until the day after surgery.
2. You may feed your pet a small meal after coming home from the hospital. Sometimes canned or soft food is more palatable to a pet after surgery. Do not be surprised if your dog or cat does not have much of an appetite the first night. If this persists for a day or two after surgery, please call.
3. One common side effect of anesthesia and the pain medications your pet has been given is for them to be more vocal or disoriented. Less commonly, this is a sign of pain. You can often distinguish between being in pain or being disoriented if you try petting and comforting your dog or cat. If he or she settles down readily, the vocalization is more likely an effect of the anesthesia rather than pain. If your pet is still very restless when comforted, doesn't quiet the vocalizing, or is looking at or biting at the incision, this could be an indication there is some degree of discomfort.
4. Please give the analgesics (pain killers) and any other medications as directed. We work very hard to make sure your pet has appropriate painkillers before, during, and after surgery. For some cases this may include local blocks (medications to numb the nerve or joint). Applying an ice pack wrapped in a light cloth (as long as the incision is not covered by a large bandage) for 5-10 minutes, two to three times per day for the first few days after surgery will help decrease inflammation and make your pet feel more comfortable.
5. If you have any concerns about your pet, please call your regular veterinarian or Dr. Boswell. If your pet seems to be having trouble breathing, has an excessive amount of discharge from the incision, is non-responsive or you think there may be an emergency, please take your pet immediately to the local emergency hospital.