

Aftercare Tips

DO expect to provide care for the cat for at least **24** hours after surgery to allow the effects of the anesthesia to wear off. This needs to happen in a covered, temperature controlled environment as cats are unable to regulate their body temperature after anesthesia.

DO closely monitor the cats during the recovery period being watchful for bleeding, signs of distress or lethargy. Cats should be alert and baseline temperament. Keep the nurse hotline number handy for concerns. Read the paperwork/surgical notes provided by the clinic.

DO keep cats covered at all times to reduce stress.

DO keep males and females that are not pregnant or in heat in their traps for the **24** hour recovery period. Place them on absorbent puppy pads. Provide food and water by carefully lifting the door just enough to slide the bowls in. You may plan to release them **24** hours after picking them up from the clinic.

DO consider releasing males the same day if the weather is not too cold/wet once they have eaten and appear wide awake.

DO release lactating females as soon as possible on the same day as surgery so she can return to her litter. Clinic staff and paperwork will indicate if she is postpartum and lactating. Offer a meal, and if she appears wide awake or has eaten, that is sufficient for release.

DO keep all previously pregnant females in their trap for a three day recovery. Be aware that the fetuses will be aborted along with the spay- this requires a larger incision. Provide daily water, food and absorbent pad changes as needed. If the cat poops in the trap and it cannot be thoroughly/easily cleaned, release the cat prior to the third day. Operation Spay Bay might offer a med pack- the rescue typically accepts three days of pain meds but declines the antibiotics. Don't start the antibiotics unless you intend to finish the **7-10** day twice daily course. If giving meds, we like to mix in cat treat purees like Churu- seems to be irresistible!

DO transfer all females that were in heat to a crate for a **7** day recovery. Male cats can still attempt to mate with an in heat female which could increase the chances of infection or wounds if you were to release her prior to **7** days of healing. Provide a blanket or bed, a small litter box sifted daily, and daily water and food.

DO reach out to the rescue for any equipment that needs to be borrowed.

DO clean the traps and any other equipment by scrubbing with an antibacterial dish soap and return promptly to the rescue if they were loaned.

DO release the cats precisely where you trapped them. It is **TNR** for Trap, Neuter and Return, not Relocate.