



Post-operative care for patients after abdominal surgery

Medication:	Antibiotics:	We usually dispense antibiotics like claviseptin (tablets given twice daily)
	Anti-inflammatories:	We may have dispensed carprofen (tablets given twice daily), or meloxicam (a liquid given once daily). These are given with food. They occasionally cause vomiting or diarrhoea, in which case prompt advice should be sought.
	Analgesics:	We may have dispensed tramadol, (tablets given twice daily) for 5-7 days.

The wound must not be interfered with or bathed. An Elizabethan collar can help prevent interference with wounds. Any ooze may be gently blotted with kitchen towel, but if ooze is seen, advice should be sought.

Rechecks a few days after surgery may be with your own vet to save un-necessary travelling. We could do this check-up if travelling is not an issue, and all post-op check-ups are free of charge with us under our “fixed price” schemes. Please contact us to book an appointment for us to see the case back 2-3 weeks post-operatively when we can remove sutures/staples and check that all is going to plan.

Dressings may be used post-operatively, typically a thin white Primapore, to give the wound some on-going protection. These should be kept dry at all times. If they do become significantly wet then they can be removed.

Strict restriction and supervision of activity is required. Dogs should be on a lead anywhere outside of the house including the garden. Allow just 5 minutes of lead restricted exercise, three times a day, until you are advised to the contrary. Consider confining cats to a cage. Cages which will fold flat when not in use are readily available from pet superstores, Argos, many DIY stores or from on-line retailers. Cats can be given several short periods of supervised walking around the kitchen each day. For both species, running / jumping / climbing (into cars, upstairs, onto furniture, onto kitchen work tops etc) should be prevented. Consider using stair gates and ramps, and keep doors and windows shut to avoid escapes!

Post-operative care for patients after surgery on the stomach and / or the intestines:

Intestinal surgery commonly follows the ingestion of “foreign bodies” like plastic, toys, teats from babies bottles, pebbles, fruit “stones”, corks, fishing hooks, kebab sticks, cotton, wool, stuffed toys, socks etc. Please don’t expect your pet to have learnt its lesson! Don’t let them consume another foreign body, and especially not while they are convalescing! We have known dogs have three surgeries for three separate foreign bodies over a two week period! Remove temptation! If necessary use a plastic cage muzzle which still allows panting and drinking. Sometimes intestinal surgery is for the removal of cancerous growths. Sometimes we simply need to cut a hole in the intestine and sometimes we need to remove a length of it.

It is very unlikely that your pet will have been discharged until it is eating, drinking and until we are confident that this is occurring without vomiting or diarrhoea. However if vomiting and diarrhoea are seen, seek prompt advice.

The real “danger period” of internal wound breakdown with the serious and potentially fatal consequence of peritonitis, is the first three days after surgery. Quoted figures for internal wound breakdown are in the region of 10% of cases, however our experience is that this is probably overly pessimistic. A patient that is still recovering well by three days post-operatively is not “out of the woods” but its likelihood of making a full recovery is greatly increased. Strict exercise restriction and vigilance is still required for two weeks post-operatively.

Several small meals should be offered each day rather than just one or two larger ones. The total volume of food that should be consumed per day should be limited to about two thirds of your pet’s normal food volume for the first few days post-operatively. A nutritious, readily digestible and balanced food is ideal. Your vet can provide you with a commercial diet or we can advise on this for your particular pet.

For further advice please contact us by phone on 07944 105501 or at mail@wm-referrals.com