



Aftercare following a general anaesthetic

Coughing can be noted for a few days after a general anaesthetic because of the placement of a tube into the trachea (“the windpipe”) to administer oxygen and anaesthetic gas during the procedure. Coughing is typically intermittent and only occasional. The coughing should be getting milder and less frequent as time goes on. If the reverse is true, seek advice.

Copious and frequent urination in the early post-anaesthetic period is likely because we routinely administer intravenous fluids during anaesthesia. Please be ready for this. Give them plenty of opportunity to relieve themselves, make a point of noting whether urine is passed, and keep them clean and dry. If no urine has been passed by the morning after the procedure, please ring us for advice.

Patients may be less inclined than usual to drink in the hours after a general anaesthetic. This is because we use intravenous fluids routinely and the pets will be well hydrated. Water should still be provided though.

A pet will typically eat within a few hours of an anaesthetic. Their normal diet can usually be fed.

Faeces may not be passed for a day or two after a general anaesthetic. This is not generally a cause for concern, but if nothing has been passed by four days, please ring for advice.

After a general anaesthetic, or even a sedative, a patient may remain drowsy for a few hours, and be less able to manage their own temperature and comfort than usual. In summer keep them in the shade to avoid overheating which might result if they doze in the sunshine. In winter, make sure they stay tucked up in the warm. Avoid your pet getting wet if it is raining as this is likely to cause chilling. Use an umbrella when they are taken out to relieve themselves!

Vomiting in the hours after an anaesthetic is not typical. It would most likely be due to the patient’s underlying condition or to medications that have been given like non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. If vomiting or diarrhoea is noted, you should seek advice promptly.

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