

Post Operative Instructions

Rabbit Neutering

After undergoing surgery today performed under a general anaesthetic it is important you follow these instructions to ensure your rabbit feels more comfortable and aids a speedy recovery.

When you bring your rabbit home after surgery he/she should be alert and responsive to you. It is important that they are kept warm, their ears are a good indication of body temperature. Please keep him/her indoors in their normal hutch/pen or in a confined space at home.

Provide a warm soft bed and minimise hard straw or hay to avoid irritation to the surgical site. Warmed towels can be a useful means of bedding. Hot water bottles can be used as long as they are well covered and the rabbit has some means of moving away from them if they start to get too hot.

He/she may well be a little unsteady on their feet for the first night but should be back to normal by the next morning. It is imperative that your rabbit should eat after surgery. Always provide his/her normal diet, fresh hay as well as their normal pellets or hard mix. A small handful of fresh leafy greens may help encourage eating at first. If he/she is not eating completely normally within 12 hrs after coming home please contact us immediately, do NOT wait, this can become a serious problem for rabbits.

Allow the rabbit to rest in the cage or confined space for the first 24-48hrs before allowing any playtime outside the cage. Limit the amount of freedom at first to prevent injury from jumping around too much. Any sudden movements may put strain on his/her wound and stitches and cause complications. Wait at least a week before allowing to play outdoors where there is any dirt that could cause an infection in the wound.

Always keep your rabbit's cage/hutch and litter areas very clean, cleaning out even more frequently in the days following surgery. Watch your rabbit's stools which should remain normal consistency and volume. Check the wound daily for any swelling, discharge, bleeding or redness. (Female rabbits will have a small incision on their tummy, and male rabbits 2 small incisions on their scrotum) Make sure they are not biting or pulling at the wounds and that it remains closed. Some wounds may have stitches or staples which will need to be removed in 10 days, others may not in which case all are internal and will dissolve.

Please note: Keep separate from any other same sex rabbits until the wound is healed, after this time it is fine for them to reunite with other rabbits of the same sex or those who are already neutered. However, male rabbits can still impregnate an unspayed female for up to 60 days after surgery. Therefore we recommend not housing a newly castrated male with any unspayed female for this time. Hormone related behaviour problems such as marking territory or aggressive tendencies will usually improve after neutering, however it takes some weeks for the hormones to settle down so this will not happen straight away.

CONTACT US IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:

- Rabbit is chewing at the wound
- Wounds open up or become red, swollen or has any discharge
- Rabbit has not started to eat normally within 12 hrs of being home
- Stools are mushy or rabbit has diarrhoea
- Rabbit is too quiet, depressed or weak or if remains at the back of the cage not moving around
- If in pain, he/she may be hunched over, not wanting to eat or grinding teeth
- If rabbit appears cold or losing body heat (check ears to see if cold)

Your next appointment should be made indays, please see reception.

Out of hours contact – Vets Now Emergency Service - 028 90651729