

# Will It Hurt?

## Important Information Every Pet Owner Should Know About Their Pets Surgery

**Q:** *Is surgery painful for my pet?*

**A:** We take every precaution to ensure the best possible care for your pet. But it is important to remember that all surgeries are painful, whether the patient is a person or an animal.

While pets feel pain like people do, we know they don't express their discomfort the same way. Domesticated pets retain some of the instincts that were necessary for survival in the wild, so they may actually *hide* signs of pain. This can make it difficult for both you and veterinarians to assess how animals are feeling.

That is why our staff takes a different approach. Knowing that spays and neuters are painful, we *expect* patients to feel discomfort – and treat them accordingly. Why? Not only does pain cause discomfort, it may actually slow the healing and recovery process, too. Our patients are very important to us, so we ensure the best possible care for them.

Fortunately, recent advances in veterinary medicine have produced safe, effective, FDA-approved options to manage your pet's surgical pain.

**Q:** *How will pain relief be addressed during my pet's surgery?*

**A:** The last 10 years have produced significant advances in the understanding and treatment of pain, and we now routinely provide pain medication before, during and after surgical procedures. Pain management procedures vary depending on the type of surgery being done.

Medication for “at home use” to control pain after a soft tissue surgery is typically needed for 3 days, and costs about \$20.00. (Orthopedic surgeries need pain medication for a longer period of time.)

**Q:** *What can I do to help my pet at home after surgery?*

**A:** Because each pet is unique, we will work with you to form a pain management plan for your pet.

In general, pets returning home after surgery should be kept isolated from other animals and children for the first 12 hours. Keep your pet in a quiet, warm and comfortable part of the house, and discourage any type of jumping, running or rough play. Allow the patient to resume normal activity gradually. Check the incision daily for swelling, bleeding, discharge, redness or reopening of the wound. Prevent the pet from scratching, licking or biting stitches. And, of course, remember to administer unlimited doses of love and attention.

We also recommend administering pain medication at home to keep your pet comfortable and well-rested.