

Community Outreach

FERAL CAT SPAY/NEUTER RECOVERY

Thank you for being a Community Cat Hero! You are making a difference for cats in your community, and you should be proud!

The tips below are to help your feral friend through their recovery from spay/neuter surgery.

1. When picking up your feral friend please check the trap and ensure the door is securely closed. If needed use a clip or zip tie to ensure it will not open and the cat is safe and secure in his/her trap. The trap should be covered with a towel or some other cloth to provide a soothing dark environment, so the cat is less stressed.
2. After surgery it takes a full 24 hours for the anesthesia to leave the cat's body so do not release the cat before 24 hours. It would be dangerous to release before!
3. Male cats require 24 hours to recover and females 48 to 72 hours to recover from surgery. Lactating mother cats that have a nursing litter of kittens should be returned as soon as possible, once she is orientated, she should be released back to her family. Cats that were pregnant should be held for 72 hours after the surgery.
4. After surgery you may see light spotting of blood on the paper in the trap, this is normal. However, if you notice pooling or heavy bleeding you should contact the veterinarian right away.
5. The recovery area should be a quiet, temperature-controlled area that is away from people and other animals. Cats are unable to regulate their body temperature when anesthesia is still present in their body so it is important the recovery area's temperature can be controlled. Keep the trap covered while they are recovering, the darkness will make it less stressful, and the cat will feel safer.
6. The cats should be provided with water but don't feed an adult cat until 8 hours after the surgery. Kittens on the other hand should be fed a small meal once they are settled in their recovery area. Kittens have high metabolisms so it's important they have nourishment.
7. Each day the cat is in recovery check the incision to ensure it is healing properly. Use a flashlight and shine in the trap where the surgery site is. A little redness is ok, but it should not be swollen or have heavy discharge.
8. Before releasing make sure the cat is fully awake and oriented. It's best to release the cat early morning or late evening when it is quiet. You must release the cat where you originally trapped him/her. Leave food in water in that location if different than the usual feeding station. The next day you can feed at the usual feeding station again.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. Always be safe! You are working with feral cats; they are not use to human contact!
2. Never stick your fingers in the trap
3. When opening the trap to change the paper or feed and water you must do it appropriately and ensure the cat does not escape. Always use a cage/trap divider, it should be inserted into the trap, securing the cat in the back of the cage/trap before you open it. Once the cat is secure behind the divider you can quickly clean the cage/trap safely. Use a non-toxic pet safe cleaner to wipe out the cage/trap and then place fresh paper, food and water.