



RECOVERING A CAT IN A TRAP FOLLOWING SURGERY

You've already proven to be a hero for the cats by trapping them and taking them to the veterinarian to be neutered and vaccinated. Now after their surgery, the cats will need your care and attention during the recovery period before they can be released. Follow these tips for a smooth transition from medical care to returning the cats to their outdoor homes.

1. The cats should be returned to you in the same covered traps in which you brought them to the clinic, with clean newspaper inside. You'll receive their medical records, including microchip information. Keep these in a safe place but accessible in case you need to show them to another veterinarian or shelter. And, these important documents make the case for the cats receiving proper care. Make sure you register the microchip.
2. Allow the cats to recover overnight. The cats will need some time to recuperate after their surgery, so keep them indoors in their covered traps. Make sure they're in a temperature-controlled environment—cats can't regulate their body temperature while recovering from anesthesia. Keep the cats away from loud noises, music, pets and people. Do not let children near them. A warm bathroom is fine.
3. Safety first! Keep the traps covered to ease the cats' stress. Never open the trap doors or let the cats out. As cute as they may look, don't stick your fingers through the bars or try to handle them when they are awake.
4. Monitor the cats. Check the cats often and keep an eye out for any bleeding, possible inflammation, possible infection, and lack of appetite.
5. Call the clinic if you have any concerns.
6. Give the cats a little canned and dry food and water when you get home. When feeding the cats, lift the back door of the trap slowly and only allow a small gap. Slide a plastic lid with a little bit of food on it through the gap—don't put your hand inside. You can also use an isolator or trap divider to do this. If you don't have an isolator and you feel you can't slide a plastic lid in without the cat trying to escape, then don't feed them. The cats will be OK, and they can eat once they are released. Resume normal feeding the day after surgery.
7. Make sure all cats are fully conscious, clear-eyed, and alert before release. If a cat requires more than 48 hours of care, transfer her to a large crate or holding pen. You may also need to transfer a cat into a clean trap if the newspaper becomes soiled during recovery.