

Post-Surgical Care and Release Instructions For Spayed/Neutered Feral Cats

ACCOMODATIONS

All feral cats should be **kept in their traps** until they are ready for release. Always **keep the trap covered with a towel** to help calm the cat. They will still be recovering from the anesthesia and must be kept somewhere warm and covered in a protected place such as a garage or covered porch. It is a good idea to **elevate the trap** slightly above newspaper over plastic (an old shower curtain for example) to allow feces and urine to fall through the trap and away from the cat. Check the newspaper under the trap to see if it is soiled and if it is, change the paper. Check the cat periodically to make sure it is breathing and is not bleeding heavily. Heavy bleeding is not a common thing to happen. If you have major concerns about the cat, call the vet who performed the surgery or contact an emergency veterinarian in your area (see "Veterinarian Emergency Services" in the yellow pages) and please leave a message about the incident on our voice mail.

FOOD & WATER

The anesthesia may cause nausea. Therefore **food & water should not be offered until the cat is fully awake**. This is done by slipping a small cat food can or mayonnaise jar cover inside the trap by gently opening the front of the trap just enough to squeeze it in. Water can then be poured in through the top of the trap into the cup or lid.

For cats older than 4 months food should be offered the next morning – **kittens four months and younger should be fed when fully awake** – give them a small amount of canned food. Again a can or lid can be used to drop the food into from above. Or you can cut up a square of newspaper and put the canned food on it and slip it into the trap.

RELEASE

Release feral **male** cats the morning after surgery. **Females** should be kept an extra day. If the cat was **pregnant**, you may want to keep her 2 days just to make sure she is O.K. If a cat gets very aggravated or will not urinate or eat or drink, you should release sooner. If the cat has been **nursing kittens** and they are less than 2 weeks old, release her 10 hours after surgery so that she may continue nursing as soon as possible.

Always take the cat back to the place where you trapped it and where it is being fed. It is safest to release at night, for the cat's sake and yours. Place the front of the trap so that it opens on to an area as free of obstructions as possible and not facing a busy street.

THESE ARE SCARED UNTAMED ANIMALS. PLEASE BE CAREFUL WHEN HANDLING THE TRAP WITH A CAT INSIDE. IT IS RARE, BUT IF BITTEN, SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION AND QUARANTINE THE CAT.

SUTURES DO NOT NEED REMOVAL

All feral cats are identified as being altered by a tipped right ear. This is to prevent putting cats through unnecessary stress and anesthesia if trapped again.