



# FERAL CAT POST-OPERATIVE CARE INSTRUCTIONS

***PLEASE RETURN AT 4:30 PM TODAY TO PICK-UP YOUR PET, UNLESS A STAFF MEMBER HAS INSTRUCTED YOU OTHERWISE. THE CLINIC CLOSSES AT 5:00 PM. Pets left at our clinic past 5:00 pm, on the day of surgery, are subject to a \$20 late fee and may also be charged a boarding fee.***

**These instructions apply only to feral cats and should not be applied to pet cats for any reason.**

Today your feral cat was spayed or neutered, vaccinated for rabies, and his/her left ear was tipped straight across. The Spay Memphis veterinarians also make every effort to treat cats that have other injuries as noted during the procedure. Leave male and female cats in the trap you pick them up in at our clinic. Allow the cat to remain in the trap until fully recovered and ready to release. All cats should be kept 24-48 hours in a temperature-controlled area. A garage may work if the weather is mild (not too cold or hot). Cover trap loosely with a large towel/sheet for shelter and warmth. Make sure to leave some space through which the cat can get fresh air. Throughout the evening, monitor the cat for breathing and possible bleeding. Do NOT stick your finger through the trap or try to touch or handle the cat. ALWAYS wear sturdy, protective leather gloves if you feel that you must handle the cat. If you are bitten seek medical attention and do NOT release the cat. The cat must be quarantined. Contact your veterinarian for quarantine instructions.

**FEEDING INSTRUCTIONS:** You may offer the cat water and 1/4-1/2 amount of a regular diet tonight as long as they are awake/alert. If the cat is still sedated/groggy, withhold food/water until alert. The cat may choose not to eat tonight due to post-operative nausea or being nervous in their surroundings. Do not offer them table scraps, milk, etc. Do not over feed or over water the cat as this may cause vomiting. Wet food is often best for truly feral cats as it provides water intake as well.

**CLEANING THE CAT'S WASTE:** Place newspapers or plastic on the floor UNDER the trap to catch urine, feces, and food that may fall from the trap. The trap may be carefully placed on bricks or suitable objects to be elevated from the floor so that the cat is not lying in its own waste. It is very important, if you elevate the trap, to use good judgment so that it does not topple over when the cat moves around.

**MONITORING:** Incision Area: A small amount of redness and swelling is normal. Excessive swelling or drainage is not normal; you should contact either Spay Memphis or your regular veterinarian to determine treatment. Opening of the incision or excessive bleeding is considered an emergency; you should seek immediate veterinary attention. Feral cats often pant; this is not an emergency and can be 'normal' feral cat behavior when they are confined. Occasionally, the left ear may bleed after being tipped; this bleeding should not persist.

**RELEASING THE CAT:** Once the cat is alert, clear-eyed, and shows no signs of illness he/she may be released. Only release cats that are fully awake. Male cats can often be released the morning after surgery; female cats may need to be kept for an additional day. Keeping/confining a feral cat longer than 48 hours creates increased stress for the cat which will prevent proper healing of the surgery site. However, if bad weather or extreme temperatures are present, use good judgment to weigh the risks/benefits of keeping the cat for another day. Always release the cat where it was trapped. Relocating cats is strongly discouraged due to reports of high mortality. When releasing the cat, remove the cloth cover, open trap gate, and back away. Patiently stand back and allow the cat to leave at its own pace, usually it will run away immediately. Leave fresh food and water at the drop site.

## Contact Numbers

- Spay Memphis 901-324-3202
- Animal Emergency Center on Summer Ave 901-323-4563
- Day and Night Animal Hospital 901-500-7556

**Spay Memphis cannot be held responsible for complications resulting from a failure to follow post-op instructions or for any animals requiring attention after business hours.**