

If your pet has undergone surgery for removal of a mass located on the skin or just under the skin, your surgeon will ask you to do several things at home to help your pet heal as quickly as possible.

Activity will be restricted for approximately two weeks. By restricting exercise, we prevent excessive motion at the surgical site which can lead to wound fluid production and sometimes dehiscence (pulling apart of the sutured skin edges). Activity is usually limited to short leash walks (five minutes, ½ block). Running, jumping, and playing are to be avoided. The use of stairs may also be discouraged depending on the location of the surgical site. Short, slow walks under your control on leash are an important part of the recovery. It is when your pet is not under direct control within the home environment that accidents can happen (for example, slipping on hardwood floors, running to the front door, jumping onto the couch, etc.).



Activity should be limited to short leash walks during recovery.

Your pet should not be allowed to lick, chew, or scratch at the surgical site. These actions can cause delayed healing, dehiscence, and infection. Most patients will require an Elizabethan collar or similar device to prevent them from traumatizing the incision. We know that e-collars are not convenient for anyone involved—pet or caretaker. However, they are a necessary part of uncomplicated recovery and are usually required for no longer than two weeks.

Your surgeon may also request that you apply cold or warm compresses to the surgical site. These compresses are applied 3-4 times daily. They are intended to decrease swelling and pain and really are an important component in the healing process. Your surgeon may have you apply compresses to help prevent a seroma from forming under the incision. This is a fluid-filled sac that can form underneath an incision. This swelling may get larger for several days, then will slowly resolve. Seromas do not cause discomfort or impaired function, but they can cause delays in healing or increase risk of infection.

Sometimes drains are placed at surgery to prevent fluid accumulation at the surgical site. Drains are usually removed 3-5 days after surgery. Your discharge nurse will explain how to care for the drain as we do use several different types. Drain removal is generally quick and painless for your pet and does not require sedation.



Elizabethan collars are used to prevent your pets from licking or chewing at their incisions.