



Ovariohysterectomy

Indications

Sterilization
Ovarian disease
Uterine disease
Behavioral problems
Vaginal hyperplasia
Diabetes
Epilepsy
Mammary tumor prevention

Nutritional Plan

Postsurgically, nutrition adequate for tissue repair

Ovariohysterectomy

Ovariohysterectomy, commonly known as “spaying,” is the removal of the uterus and ovaries. Spaying stops the behavior associated with heat periods and prevents diseases – including cancer, trauma, and infections – of the ovaries, uterus, and mammary glands. This client education sheet will help you learn more about ovariohysterectomy and will review your veterinarian’s instructions for your pet’s care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

What You Should Know About Ovariohysterectomy

Pet overpopulation is a tremendous problem in the United States. According to the American Humane Association, every year at least 5.7 million dogs and cats are euthanized in shelters. Thousands more are put to sleep by veterinarians, and perhaps millions more abandoned pets die in the wild from exposure and starvation. Ovariohysterectomy is a responsible means of reducing this incredible loss of our companion animals.

Spaying eliminates heat periods, objectionable behavior – including spotting of blood in dogs – and the attraction of male animals. It also prevents unwanted litters of puppies and kittens. There is no evidence whatsoever that allowing a dog or cat to have a litter of puppies or kittens makes it a better pet.

Cancer of the mammary glands is the most common tumor in intact (non-spayed) dogs and the third most common tumor in cats. A pet spayed before its first heat cycle is seven times less likely to develop mammary gland cancer than is an intact pet. Spaying also removes the possibility of cancer of the uterus and ovaries, infections of the uterus and disorders of pregnancy and birth. Spaying is often recommended as part of the treatment for pets with mammary cancer, diabetes, epilepsy and diseases of the uterus and ovaries.

Preparation

Spaying is a routine procedure because it is performed so frequently. Nevertheless, it is major abdominal surgery and requires general anesthesia. General anesthetics are best given when a pet has an empty stomach. Follow your veterinarian's instructions carefully for withholding food and water the evening before surgery.

Before surgery your pet will be given a physical examination. Your veterinarian may offer a routine blood test to identify risks that may complicate anesthesia and surgery, particularly if your pet is older or has any history of disease.

Home Care

Recovery from ovariectomy is usually uneventful. However, complications may arise if your pet chews or licks the incision excessively or exercises too vigorously. Dogs should be exercised on a leash for the first week after surgery. Check your pet's incision at least once a day. If the incision is red and swollen, oozes blood, or begins to separate, call your veterinarian. You should also call if your pet constantly licks or chews its incision, seems depressed or won't eat. Skin sutures may need to be removed by your veterinarian.

Nutritional Plan

After an ovariectomy your veterinarian may suggest a dietary change based on your pet's age and body condition, and on the presence or absence of disease in other organs and body systems. Optimal nutrition for middle-aged and older pets provides for the pet's needs, but more importantly, reduces the health risks associated with feeding excess sodium, phosphorus, protein and calories. Foods that avoid these harmful excesses and provide proper nutrition include Hill's® Science Diet® brand pet foods.

Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). Feed only the recommended food. Be patient but firm with your pet. This is important because the success or failure of treatment depends to a large degree on strict adherence to the new food.

Presented as an educational service by



Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: _____

Patient's Name: _____

Medication(s): _____

Nutritional Recommendation: _____

Follow-Up Appointment: _____

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.