



**Goodwin Center for Community Cats  
Feral Cat Sterilization Clinic  
Post-Operative Instructions: Feral Cats**

For the safety of you and your cat(s), we recommend that you carefully follow these post-operative instructions.

1. **Keep the cat in its carrier or trap until it can move around normally.** The cat can injure itself, you, or your property if released too soon. Its coordination is hindered by anesthesia, so it will not be able to jump or climb normally until the anesthesia wears off completely.
2. **Prepare a warm, dry, draft-free, sheltered area for the cat after surgery.** Cats recovering from anesthesia are unable to regulate their body temperature normally and are especially susceptible to hot and cold weather. If the cat becomes too hot or cold, it may have a prolonged recovery or even die. Keep the recovery area warm, ideally near 85 degrees. The cat's normal temperature is around 100 degrees, so it can become chilled in a 70-degree room. In cooler temperatures, cover the traps loosely with towels or sheets to trap warm air and for security. Make sure there is ample ventilation in hot weather to avoid overheating. Place newspaper or plastic on the floor to catch urine, stool, and food that will fall from the trap. If the trap is on a cold floor (ex: garage), place a thick towel or blanket under the trap to maintain warmth. Bricks or other objects may be used to elevate the trap, so cats are not sitting in their waste. Keep noise, activity, and bright light to a minimum.
3. **Water and food:** If the cat is alert and you have safe access, provide water in a way that won't spill and get the cat or bedding wet. Provide 2-3 tbsp of canned food when the cat is awake enough to sit up. Water can be added to the canned food for additional hydration.
4. The **sutures** in the females' incisions are absorbable and do not require removal. Males do not have any sutures. The left ear has been tipped to be able to identify it at a distance as sterilized.
5. **DO NOT** give aspirin, Tylenol, or ibuprofen to your cats for pain relief. These drugs are very toxic (even deadly) to your cats. Your cats received an injection of pain medication today.
6. **Safe release:** Unless otherwise instructed on the medical record, we recommend releasing the cat the day after surgery. Cats on medications may be kept longer if they can be kept safely. Stress may hinder recovery, so early release may be more important than treatment for cats with mild conditions. If a female is lactating or is known to have kittens (noted on the medical record), we recommend releasing her as soon as she is fully awake, moving around easily, and showing normal behavior. We recommend feeding her before releasing.
7. **Normal outcomes in the first 24 hours after anesthesia/surgery:** head bobbing, wobbly movements, mild drooling, mild oozing from ear tip, mild oozing from scrotum of neutered males, and mild swelling of incisions of females. These behaviors should resolve within 24 hours. **Do not release cats that are unable to stand or walk on their own!**
8. If you have general questions regarding the Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Program, please contact the New Braunfels Community Cat Coalition at [info@nbcats.org](mailto:info@nbcats.org) or leave a message at 830-391-9312. For other questions about your cats' health or for illnesses/emergencies, contact your regular veterinarian or the nearest emergency hospital.