

Before, During, and After Your Kitty's Anesthesia Experience

7-10 Days Prior To The Procedure

Carrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -If you don't always leave your kitty's carrier out in the home as a bed, now is the time to do so! -Place the carrier with the door or top off and a comfy bed in a quiet place in your home where kitty likes to spend time. Put treats in the bed. -Once kitty is spending time in the carrier regularly, put the top/door back on but leave the door open. Continue to put treats in the carrier.
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -If your kitty is having an oral procedure, it may require eating canned food or dry food soaked in water. Start trying these options now so that they get used to them before their procedure.

Night Before The Procedure

Food and Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Feed the normal evening meal (if giving medication, give the medication before you give the whole meal, using only a spoonful of food at the most to give the medication). -Between 10 pm and midnight give an additional small meal/snack. -Do not give a breakfast meal (the most you should feed is 1 tablespoon to give medication). -Full access to water at all times
Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Before putting out a supper meal, give any prep medications labeled "night before" with a treat or with no more than 1 spoonful of favorite food. This ensures your kitty is hungry and more likely to eat the pill rather than to eat their meal around it. -Cerenia (maropitant) is given to help prevent vomiting. You will be instructed to give it either the night before or the morning of the procedure.

Morning Of The Procedure

Food and Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -NO breakfast meal (the most you should feed is 1 tablespoon/pill treats to give medication). -Full access to water at all times
Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Give the medications labeled "2 hours prior" in pill treats or with no more than 1 spoonful of favorite food. Do this in the bowl where kitty is begging for breakfast. -Cerenia (maropitant) is given to help prevent vomiting. You will be instructed to give it either the night before or the morning of the procedure. -Gabapentin helps with pain and allows us to give lower volumes of injectable and gas anesthetics during the procedure. It can have a mild sedative effect so your kitty may seem tired or their pupils may be dilated.
Bathroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make sure your kitty has had a calm morning with access to the litter box in its normal place. They much prefer going at home and the car ride can make them have to go!
Carrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -About an hour before leaving, use Feliway Wipes to apply calming natural pheromone smell to the carrier and let that dry before putting your kitty in. -Put your kitty's surgery comfort friend and a t-shirt that smells like home in the carrier! -20 minutes before you absolutely have to leave is when you should pack up kitty. This gives you a chance to stay calm and be successful if they run and hide. Put a few treats in the carrier and then calmly pick up kitty and put them in. If they hide from you, take a break - they are hungry and will come out if you calmly act like you would on a "normal morning". While you are waiting, place the carrier in the bathtub. When kitty comes out of hiding, use snacks to lure them in the bathroom and shut the door. Then put them in the carrier, quietly and calmly. -If they don't hide and you get here early, we don't mind. -If they hide and don't come out, call us, we'll adjust your appointment time as necessary!

Your Kitty's Day With Us

<p>Comfort Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Medication protocol that is designed not only to control pain but to relieve anxiety as well -A "snuggie" stuffed animal scented with relaxing pheromones in their suite -The home scented comfort friend and t-shirt stays with them in their suite -Orthopedic bedding and fleece blankets are used -Each kitty has a cave to snuggle in within their suite -Classic music and sound therapy -Snuggles of course! -Heated floors in their recovery suite
<p>Pain Management Methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Therapeutic laser treatment to relieve pain and inflammation and speed healing -Local tissue anesthetic blocks -Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory injection when appropriate -Long acting pain relieving medications -Ice therapy
<p>Anesthesia Monitoring and Safety Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Intravenous fluid therapy for blood pressure support -Intravenous antibiotic therapy when appropriate -Isoflurane gas and oxygen administered through patient's personal sterile endotracheal tube -Electronic and manual monitoring of vitals including spO2, etCO2, blood pressure, heart rate, EKG, respiratory rate, and body temperature -Body temperature management through Bair hugger heating system, warming of intravenous fluids, paw socks and a heated recovery suite
<p>Timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At admission, you will spend time with one of our team members answering some important questions about kitty's food and medication and their health in the last week before you leave for your day. -Upon arrival, kitty will have their vitals taken and be settled into their suite along with the comfort friend and t-shirt from home. -In the morning, kitty will have pre-surgical medications and relax in their suite as those take effect. -Procedures are performed late morning and afternoon, based on the procedure that your pet is having. -After your procedure, kitty will be monitored closely to make sure that they are comfortable without pain and that their body temperature remains stable. They will also receive ice therapy and, if they want, snacks! -When you pick up kitty at the previously scheduled discharge time, there will be an instruction sheet for you with home care and medications if any are required. A team member will meet with you to go over this care. The doctor will also email you instructions. -Plan to spend the evening quietly at home the night your kitty has their procedure, but by all means you should be able to go to work the day of and the day after the procedure as long as we can call you at work on the day of the procedure.

Night Your Kitty Comes Home

Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -As with any of us after anesthesia, your kitty is likely to feel tired, a bit nauseated and maybe not quite like themself. -Kitty needs a quiet, dim/dark place to recover. It's been a big day. They should not have access to stairs until they are acting completely normal, so that they don't take a tumble.
Food/Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -With most procedures, we send home a can of appetizing, yet gentle on the tummy, prescription food. -Warm the food gently if you like. If your kitty does not eat the first night, do not push or try other foods, just wait until morning and offer them breakfast. -Water should be available but know that your kitty will have had intravenous fluids so they may not feel the need to drink the first night home.
Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -If your kitty will go home with medications, you will receive instructions at discharge of what to give and when. -There are great tips on how to give medication to cats both on our Healing Paws Veterinary Care YouTube channel and at fundamentallyfeline.com/medicating-tips
Bandage and Shaved Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Check to see if kitty has a bandage on their leg where intravenous catheters were in place. If so, remove the bandage within 1 hour of returning home. -If any oozing of blood occurs at catheter site or incision, you may apply pressure with a cotton ball or ice cube wrapped in a paper towel. -If any dried blood is on the site, please gently clean with warm water rather than hydrogen peroxide as it can cause dryness and itching on shaved skin. -Bruising can be normal at the intravenous catheter site. -Kitty will be shaved for the procedure and have a few shaved locations on their body where incision is and where anesthetic monitors were applied or medications were given. -Shaved hair should grow back within a few weeks. If you notice kitty licking the area, that is because shaved hair can be itchy growing back in. You can apply a bit of ice to the area to relieve itch if it occurs. -The hair should start to grow back in a few weeks or less.
Incision Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -With most procedures, kitties do not have external sutures or they have dissolving sutures. -If your kitty seems uncomfortable, apply a soft ice pack/frozen veggies wrapped in a thin cloth gently to the incision for 5-10 minutes twice daily for 3 days. -No Elizabethan collar or surgical shirt is required unless your kitty is licking the incision and then they should absolutely wear one and wear it for a full week.
Urination and Defecation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Due to fluid therapy, some kitties may urinate more than normal or even drip some urine the first few days. Some kitties do not urinate the first 24 hrs - this is okay if they aren't straining. -Some kitties will not have a bowel movement for up to 72 hours. Also, it can be normal to have one soft, or even liquid, bowel movement. That one loose movement may have some blood -that is okay but do let us know if it occurs.

Bringing Kitty Home When You Have Other Cats

When you bring your kitty home from surgery, to other cats in the household, they will essentially be “new”. They’ll smell and act a bit differently the first day and so the other kitties initially view them as a new cat in the household. Because of this, cats who are brought home from vet visits, if not reintroduced to the household gradually, the can experience stress, bullying, and even aggression from their housemates. We recommend the following to make the reintroduction to home minimally stressful for your kitty.

- Initially keep surgery kitty separate from the other cats in a separate “recovery” room that is quiet and dimly lit with the door closed. Do this for at least a night, but don't rush things. You will want to reintroduce housemates as you would cats who have never met.
- Surgery kitty’s room should have a food bowl, water, litter box, scratching post, toys and napping spots - this is their sanctuary spot. Your other cats should have those options elsewhere in the house so that they don't have to share initially. During the time of separation, of course be sure to spend time with surgery kitty in their sanctuary and give your other cats snuggles/play as well. This allows all cats to get the attention they need but also lets them smell each other on you.
- Cat scent swapping is very important. Gently wipe surgery kitty with a towel when they first come home and put that towel next to your “home kitty’s” food dish the first night so that they can smell it. Once home kitties smell the towel and don't hiss or growl then gently wipe home kitty’s fur with the towel and then leave it in their napping place. Wipe the home kitties with another towel and allow your surgery kitty to smell it. When surgery kitty can smell it without growling or hissing, then gently wipe surgery kitty with the towel that carries home kitty’s scent and leave it in surgery kitty’s room.
- With reintroduction, you want to give the cats a reason to like each other again. Just separating them is not enough. You want them to see that good things happen when they are in the same house, then in sight of each other, and then in the same room as each other. The best way to do this is through food. You will feed them at the same time in the separate closed off rooms. Once 24-48 hrs has gone by without hissing or growling at the closed doors, then you can feed them far apart but with the door open and only open during feeding. Once that happens without growling and hissing, you can give the next meal in the same space (surgery kitty's sanctuary room). If they do well eating far apart from each other in surgery kitty's sanctuary room, then feed them near each other in their normal home feeding locations. If there is trouble, go back to the last feeding arrangement that did not causing growling and hissing.
- Do not move on to a different stage of reintroduction until there is no growling or hissing. It is very important not to rush this process. It could take 12 hours, or, in delicately balanced households, up to 7 or more days. What matters most is that the kitties return to a neutral amicable relationship. Stress post procedure can delay healing and stressful cat relationships are not enjoyable home environments. If you have any questions about reintroduction, keep surgery kitty in the last stage they were most comfortable (or the home cats were most comfortable with) and reach out to us for help!

Days Following The Procedure

Behavior	-If your kitty received buprenorphine for pain management, they may be quite drowsy and
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	<p>that is okay. It is better to sleep comfortably than to be awake and painful.</p> <p>-Kitties who receive pain medication sometimes become more talkative and roam around the house more. This is normal and does not mean they are uncomfortable.</p> <p>-The best way to know if your kitty is in pain is to gently stroke the area around the surgery site. If they do not pull away or cry out then they are comfortable. If they do, please call.</p>
Food/Water	<p>-If your kitty received Zorbium, this medication lasts in the body for 4 full days. Side effects that sometimes occur are extreme drowsiness, excessive salivation (drooling) and lack of appetite. Do not be surprised or concerned if you see any of these signs but do please let us know. If your kitty is not eating well but they are not painful to the touch, they are likely not hungry due to the Zorbium. Usually on day 3 they go right back to being hungry. Please do not hesitate to check in with us if they aren't eating well and you aren't sure if they are painful. We are here to help!</p>
Exercise	<p>-In order to keep the incision from swelling, your kitty's exercise must be somewhat restricted for a week after surgery. Please avoid interactive play using feather wands etc that lead to jumping and be careful that they are not involved in rough play with others.</p>
Incision Care	<p>-Most kitties will not have sutures or staples, but if your kitty does, we will remove them in 7-10 days.</p> <p>-If your kitty licks their incision, they should wear an e-collar or recovery shirt at all times for at least 1 week.</p> <p>-If you feel a scab or glue on the incision, let it fall off on its own so as not to disturb healing.</p> <p>-Please monitor any external incisions daily for a week. If any swelling, heat, or discharge is noticed please give us a call and send us a photo of what you are seeing.</p>
Bowel Movements	<p>-Some kitties do not have a bowel movement for up to 72 hours. If they are not straining to poop, this is okay. If they strain to go or they don't for more than 72 hrs please let us know.</p> <p>-One bout of soft to liquid stool can occur within the first 72 hrs after surgery. If this happens more than once or there is any blood or it looks like black tar, please do let us know. It is not unusual to have some bright red blood in stool once the first few days after surgery.</p>
Vomiting	<p>-One bout of mild vomiting within 24 hours can occur. If it does, hold back food and treats for 12 hrs. If this happens more than once or there is any blood or gritty brown material present, please do let us know.</p>
Grooming or Bathing	<p>-Kitty may groom themselves but should not lick the incision area more than one or two licks.</p> <p>-Do not immerse your kitty in water for a bath for 2 weeks after surgery as the incision must not get wet.</p> <p>-If you need to clean up an area on your kitty please use a damp cloth to gently wipe them clean.</p>