

POST-SURGERY/RECOVERY PROCESS Information Sheet

CAUTION: Cats can die of hypothermia or heat stroke during post-surgery recovery. Remember this simple rule-of-thumb: If it's too hot or cold for you, then it's too hot or cold for the cats. Be careful about leaving cats in traps on the ground or floor, as these surfaces can be much hotter or colder than the air temperature. If possible, keep the cats raised above the ground or floor, even if it's only on long pieces of lumber.

The following guidelines are intended for Sun City Cat volunteers (including caregivers, trappers and anybody else who will be involved) understand and oversee the post-surgery recovery process, ensuring that program cats will be returned safely to their outdoor homes.

- The stitches used by the veterinary staff are dissolvable, so they do not need to be removed. The entire recovery process, therefore, takes place while the cats are in their traps.
- Some cats take longer to recover than others. Never return a cat before he's fully recovered from surgery and anesthesia.
- Keep the traps covered to reduce the cats' stress. Never open the trap doors or allow the cats out of the trap. Do not stick your fingers into the trap, or attempt to handle cats for any reason.
- The cats will be groggy as they come out of the anesthesia, but they should become more alert and active as the evening goes on. The disorientation they experience can cause them to overreact to normal stimulation and behave in unpredictable ways. Keep recovering cats away from other animals (especially dogs) and children.
- For the most part, leave recovering cats alone but check in every hour or two to monitor their progress. Watch for signs of distress, such as vomiting, bleeding, labored breathing or grogginess more than 24 hours after surgery. If you observe any of these symptoms, seek veterinary assistance immediately. **(caregiver is responsible for the payment of medical treatment or advise, Sun City Cats will not pay any veterinary expenses).**
- If a cat is vomiting while still unconscious their head should be turned to avoid choking. Sometimes this can be achieved by gently tipping the trap no more than a 30 degree angle to change the cats' position, gently tip the trap so that you don't harm the cat by jostling her too much.