

## Post-Surgery Checklist and Reminders

**Transport Safely.** Never transport cats in an open-bed truck or closed, unventilated car trunk.

**Safe and Warm.** The cat(s) MUST BE HELD OVERNIGHT! Cats should recuperate in a warm, draft-free environment. Your cat is still recovering from anesthesia when you pick him/her up, and general anesthesia lowers the cat's body temperature. Be sure that the temperature of the room in which the cat will be recovering in is regulated and comfortable – not too hot and not too cold. Use fans, if needed, during hot weather and heaters, if needed, during cold weather.

**Keep the cat covered.** Keep the traps fully covered at all times. A blanket or old towel is fine. This will provide warmth in addition to the sense of calm for the cat.

**Monitor, Monitor, Monitor!** Do NOT open the trap! Don't place trapped cat(s) in your holding area and forget about them! Check in throughout the night and again in the morning. Peek under the trap cover to visually assess the cat. See "What to expect" below for recovery behavior.

**Food and Water.** Feed the cat canned, wet food when sufficiently awake. This is Six (6) HOURS AFTER SURGERY. Wet food is preferable over dry food because it is 75% water, and it further hydrates the cat. Water can be made available at any time.

**Release the morning after surgery.** If cat appears normal, then he/she should be released the morning after surgery in the EXACT LOCATION WHERE YOU TRAPPED IT. The longer the cat is held in the trap, the more stress they will have due to being in captivity.

**Safety First.** Follow the trapping instructions provided in your Caring for Community Cats packet. **Never** attempt to handle a feral cat. Don't stick fingers in the trap or allow children or other pets near the trap.

### **Recovery – what to expect:**

#### **Normal Recovery**

Panting  
Lethargy  
Deep Sleep  
Slight wobbly movements  
Slight bleeding from the ear tip  
Shivering the next morning

#### **Abnormal Recovery**

Vomiting  
Dilated Eyes  
Fast Breathing  
Ongoing Wobbliness  
Continued bleeding or discharge from surgery site

\*If any of these symptoms are occurring in the morning, DO NOT release the cat! If you have concerns the cat is slow to recover, has incision complication, or is demonstrating any other abnormal problems, contact SFAS immediately – (505) 983-4309.



Gatos de Santa Fe, a project of the Santa Fe Animal Shelter.