



# Frequently Asked Post-Op Questions

## *Metropolitan Veterinary Hospital Neurology Department*

### ***How often do I need to express my pet's bladder?***

- You should express the bladder every 6-8 hours at home.

### ***What should I do if I have difficulty expressing my pet's bladder at home?***

- If you are unable to successfully express the bladder for 18 hours, it is imperative you take your pet to your regular veterinarian or bring them to the ER to have this done. Patients who have a full bladder will feel discomfort. They may also be in danger of experiencing serious medical complications. Here are some video links to step-by-step tutorials on bladder expressions for your pet:
- <https://youtu.be/G8kuOD2Iup4> (male)
- <https://youtu.be/Qyc181o-g0A> (female)

### ***What if my pet seems to be urinating large amounts or leaking urine while resting?***

- Your pet may have received a lot of IV fluids while in hospital. It can take 1-2 days for those to be flushed out of their system and things to return to normal. Also, some medications used during surgery can affect your pet's ability to urinate normally for a couple days. Offer additional short walks and additional time outside to give them the opportunity to relieve themselves more frequently. Please call our office if your pet has not urinated at all in 24 hours or if you think they are straining to urinate.

### ***When will my pet have a bowel movement?***

- It is normal for your pet to have a bowel movement any time after surgery, but it can be 1-3 days after surgery before a bowel movement is seen. This is due to a combination of fasting, anesthesia and medications that have been sent home with your pet. Please call our office if your pet is straining to defecate or if no bowel movement has been seen 5 days after surgery.

### ***What if my pet has diarrhea?***

- Some diarrhea can be a common side effect for some pets due to the stress of surgery and the change in their daily routine. Please call our office if the diarrhea is lasting more than 48 hours after being home or if your pet seems to be having an excessive amount of diarrhea. Occasionally there can be a small amount of bright red blood in the diarrhea if your pet has been stressed, but again, please call our office if you think it is excessive or if you are concerned.

### ***I am afraid my pet will gain weight. Should I feed him/ her less during the time of exercise restriction?***

- No. The duration of time exercise restriction is advised by the doctor is also a time for healing. Please offer the amount of food you would give him if he were well. It is okay to eliminate treats or other snacks that are not part of a normal, healthy diet.



### ***What should I do if my pet is not interested in eating or drinking?***

- Try not to worry. No one likes to be forced to eat when they are not feeling well. If your pet received IV fluids while in the hospital, it is likely that he/she is well hydrated. If your pet shows no enthusiasm for the normal diet, you can offer boiled chicken or boiled hamburger and rice.

### ***What to do if my pet won't take their medications?***

- Bread, cream cheese, peanut butter or chicken meat balls are great at hiding medications. First offer them the treat without the pill, then hide pill in the next offering and lastly offer again without the medication. Pill Pockets™, which are sold at most pet stores, are another great way to hide medication and can be used similarly to the aforementioned treats.
- Some pharmacies will provide gel caps. These can be used to hide your pet's pill in. They mask the taste and your pet may take them better in treats than just the pill itself.
- If your pet still doesn't take the medication, a pill gun or pill stick can be used to push the pill to the back of the throat. Once the medication is there, remove the pill gun or stick and close your pet's mouth. Rub their neck until they swallow. A small amount of water can also be syringed into their mouth to help them swallow.

### ***How long should I give medications for?***

- It is important to finish all medications provided as directed. It is especially important to finish all antibiotics as prescribed unless directed otherwise.

### ***What if the medication is making my pet sick?***

- If you think your pet is not tolerating the medications well, first make sure you try giving the medications with a small meal, unless otherwise instructed. If you are still concerned your pet is sick from the medications, please call our office so we can discuss what the next steps should be.

### ***Can all the medications sent home with my pet be given together?***

- Unless otherwise directed in your discharge paperwork, all medications being sent home are safe to be given at the same time.

### ***How can I tell if my pet is uncomfortable?***

- Interpreting signs of pain in animals is a challenge even for veterinary professionals. Some common things to watch for include vocalization, difficulty in finding a resting position, restlessness, anxiety, disinterest in attention or affection, and lack of enthusiasm for food or treats.

### ***How likely is it that my pet will have this problem again?***

- Unfortunately, we cannot predict the future. However, it is possible that this type of injury could occur again. In a recent study, it was found that between 15-25% of animals with intervertebral disk disease had a reoccurrence of signs. The best way to minimize the chance of future injury is to follow the lifestyle changes described in your pet's hospital release instructions.



### ***What should I consider to be signs of improvement in my pet's neurologic status?***

- Movement of the affected limbs, voluntary urinations, and increased enthusiasm for activity are all signs of healing. Anything that you consider to be a return to normal behavior is a positive sign.

### ***When can my pet have a bath?***

- We recommend your pet does not have a full bath or get groomed until their incision has healed (usually after the two weeks recheck).

### ***What if these "hidden pill" techniques do not work?***

- If your pet still does not take the medications, a pill gun or pill stick can be used to push the pill to the back of the throat. Once the medication is there, remove the pill gun or stick and close your pet's mouth. Rub his/her neck until he/she swallows. A small amount of water also can be syringed into his/her mouth to help him/her swallow. If you continue to have difficulty administering medications, please call our office.

### ***For additional questions, please contact our office:***

#### **Akron/Copley:**

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 8:00am-4:30pm**

**Note:** We are not in the office on Wednesdays

[neurologyakron@metropolitanvet.com](mailto:neurologyakron@metropolitanvet.com)

(330) 664-6504 – Neurology Service Direct Line

(330) 666-2976 – 24/7 Metro Emergency Service

#### **Cleveland East:**

**Monday-Thursday - 8:00am-4:30pm**

**Note:** We are not in the office on Fridays

[neurologycleveland@metropolitanvet.com](mailto:neurologycleveland@metropolitanvet.com)

(216) 201-9840 – Neurology Service Direct Line

(440) 673-3483 – 24/7 Metro Emergency Service

### ***What if I have questions after the neurology service has closed for the day?***

You are more than welcome to leave a voicemail, or send us an email, and a member of our neurology team will get back to you within 1-2 business day. **If your pet is experiencing an emergency, please contact Metropolitan Veterinary Hospital Emergency Service or take your pet to the nearest emergency veterinary clinic.**