



**ANIMAL SURGICAL**  
— & ORTHOPEDIC CENTER —  
A BETTER WAY TO OPERATE + SINCE 1986

## PREPARING FOR YOUR CAT'S CONFINEMENT AT HOME

Almost all of our patients will require some period of confinement and exercise restriction upon returning home from surgery, to allow time for the patient's incision and internal sutures to heal. In many cases, this period will last only two weeks, but for others, particularly in orthopedic cases, confinement may be required for 10 weeks or more. Your surgeon will prepare a specific recovery plan for your cat at the time of surgery.

Confinement and exercise restrictions may pose a considerable challenge for cat owners. Using the ideas below or others that work best for your home situation will ensure the best healing environment, facilitating a return to normal activity as quickly as possible.

When your cat is discharged from the hospital after surgery, a technician will go over all your discharge instructions with you, including specific confinement restrictions, take-home medications and any other information about your cat's at-home care.

### Large Dog Crate

- Wire crates are ideal confinement. They provide just enough space for your cat to move around, use the litter box and eat or drink, while allowing visual stimulation by surroundings.
- Plastic dog crates may also be used, but may feel more isolating to your cat.
- Set up the crate near an active spot in your home, or a large window or sliding door. Crates can be moved outside on nice days to provide additional stimulation. Place the crate out of direct sunlight.

### Small Room (Bathroom, Laundry or Very Small Bedroom)

- Remove any furnishings that could entice your cat to jump up. Pull mattresses down onto the floor. Make a visual barrier to jumping by placing large empty boxes or upside-down laundry baskets on counter tops. Be sure these objects will not fall off and injure your cat. Block windowsills or other tempting surfaces with rolled up towels or pillows.
- Make the area interesting by placing your cat's favorite bed on the floor, and making some fun hiding areas, such as a box turned on its side or turned over with a "doorway" cut into it.

### Fenced-Off Area

- An X-Pen or playpen may be an option, but only for very sedentary or geriatric cats that are not interested in jumping out. The playpen can also be turned upside down for more security.
- A table with four legs may be set up as a pen by wrapping netting, flexible fencing or chicken wire around all four legs. Make sure the material starts at the floor and goes all the way to the table top edge, and that it has no sharp surfaces. Opening in the material must be small enough to prevent the cat from putting its head through. Use clips or other closure methods where the two ends meet in order to form a door that can be opened and closed.

Some cats enjoy watching cat-friendly videos, and can remain calm yet entertained at the same time. If you have a computer or tablet available, place it within easy eyesight (either out of reach of a confined cat or on floor level) and open YouTube. Search for "8 hour cat videos" many of these feature birds and squirrels, among other things that cats will often enjoy viewing.

We hope these tips will help you in your planning. Please feel free to ask us if you have any questions!