

FOX VALLEY ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE \* SPAY NEUTER CLINIC  
Home Care Instructions

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- **Your rabbit will be very tired and needs to rest tonight.** Male rabbits tend to bounce back more quickly after surgery and will be almost normal within 24 to 48 hours. Females take longer and it may take 2 to 4 days for her to gradually return to normal activity.
- **Avoid excessive handling tonight and provide subdued lighting and a quiet environment.** If possible, do not change anything major in the cage for the next week because rabbits, being prey animals and creatures of habit, will feel more secure and recover more quickly if their environment is familiar to them. Change the bedding in the cage or the litter boxes daily for the next 5 days to help keep incisions clean and dry.
- **Provide water and their normal food as soon as they come home.** This includes fresh hay, pellets (if you are using them) and fresh leafy greens. Your rabbit may or may not eat the night of surgery but should be eating, urinating and passing droppings by the next morning. As mentioned, males return to normal more quickly than females but each day should be another step towards normal.
- **Give pain medication as directed.** You will be sent home with at least three days of pain medication in a liquid form. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU GIVE THIS MEDICATION DAILY to enhance recovery of your rabbit. If your male rabbit is completely back to normal activity and appetite before the medication is finished you can stop. **All females however should get the full three days of medication.**
- **How to give pain medication.** Most rabbits like the taste of the pain medication but it can be helpful to put a bit of smashed banana on the end of the syringe to make it easier to get into the mouth. A rabbit has the front teeth (incisors) for slicing, teeth in the very back for grinding and no teeth in the corner of the mouth. Only putting in the tip of the syringe in the corner of the mouth, point it diagonally across and a bit back to the other side, NOT straight back to the throat, and then push in the medication. It is a small enough amount that you can give it all at once without fear of choking. It is easiest to put the rabbit on a towel on your lap or on a counter top to be able to see and to hold the rabbit close to you to give medication. You may also try mixing a drop of the medication in a bean sized amount of smashed banana or fruit jam. Put this on a flat plate and see if the rabbit will lick it up on her own. If that works then give the rest of the medication little by little this way. Do not, however, waste the entire syringe and mix it up only to find out your rabbit won't eat it! Refer to this video: [Home Care For Your Sick Bunny 1. Feeding Critical Care](#) (**NOTE: DO NOT** cut the end of the syringe as suggested in the video) and the article [Medicating Your Rabbit](#) for more information on how to use an oral syringe with a rabbit.
- **Check your rabbit's surgical area twice a day for one week.** There is no need to touch or clean the area. The area can be easily visualized by either getting down on the ground or putting the rabbit on a counter on a towel and allow the back feet to stay on the ground and lift up the front legs so you can see the abdomen or scrotal area. Spay incisions will be green, due to tattoo ink that will leave a permanent mark on the abdomen after healing, as well as some purple surgical glue on the surface. The glue usually falls off or is licked off after 2 to 4 days. Male rabbits will have two incisions at the top of the scrotal sacs that will develop reddish colored scabs in 24 to 48 hours. (Scrotal incisions occasionally have a small amount of fresh blood around them up to 24 hours after surgery). All incisions should be dry without discharge, bleeding, opening of the incision or excessive swelling.

Occasionally a male rabbit will have a small blood vessel from under the skin bleed into the scrotal sac which will cause the sac to fill up with blood and look almost like the rabbit was not castrated. This is not a serious condition, and the blood will be reabsorbed by the body over the next 2 weeks causing the scrotal sac will shrink down again.

- **Limit exercise for the next 10 days** to avoid jumping on and off furniture and stairs
- **Do not put male castrated males back with unspayed females for a minimum of four weeks after surgery.** Males can still have live sperm living in the tubules of their reproductive tract which could cause pregnancy for 3 to 4 weeks after surgery, particularly if they are 1 year of age or older.
- **Rabbits can produce a brownish red to reddish orange colored pigment in their urine** when eating certain foods or after periods of stress. This is normal and should not be confused with blood in the urine which is bright red, without an orange or brown tint.
- **If your rabbit is kept with another bonded rabbit watch them closely for the first few hours after returning home to make sure that the rabbit that had surgery is not being chased or harassed.** Although most bonded rabbits will actually provide a great deal of comfort to the rabbit having surgery, on occasion, especially with young males, the rabbit that did not undergo surgery may be agitated and bother the surgical patient. If that is the case separate them but keep them in the same room where they can see and smell each other. Keep the surgical patient in the original cage. You can reintroduce after 10 days.
- **If you have questions or concerns about your rabbit after surgery please contact the clinic. If you feel it is an emergency please contact an exotic animal veterinarian.** See the list of [exotic animal veterinarians](#) on our website.
- **Carriers** – You may have gotten a suggestion from our rabbit veterinarian to try a different carrier for your rabbit. See our [presurgical instructions](#) for information on finding an appropriate carrier.
- **General Rabbit Care.** You may have gotten suggestions from our rabbit veterinarian on how much or what to feed your rabbit if the veterinarian feels he or she was overweight or could use a more varied diet. Please refer to these articles from Veterinary Partners for more information on proper feeding of rabbits.
  - [Vegetables and Fruits for a Rabbit Diet](#)
  - [Rabbit Care](#)