

How to care for your rabbit after surgery.

Your rabbit has just had surgery and the first thing to do is place him/her into a clean environment. This is to try and limit contamination of the wound site and also to enable clear monitoring of the toilet area. We usually recommend that if possible the bunny should come indoors overnight, to reduce the risk of hypothermia. If this is not practical then extra bedding and protection from the weather should be provided.

If your rabbit is bonded with another or if you are planning to pair your rabbit with another, please ask the surgery for advice before placing them together after surgery.

When bunny is safe in his house you should provide fresh water and food for him to eat. Something he is used to is best and we recommend dark leafy greens such as fresh pulled grass (never give lawn clippings!), spring greens, broccoli or cabbage. Good quality meadow hay should always be available to rabbits and it is best to offer fresh handfuls twice a day as well as using it for litter and bedding. The key to rabbit health is a high fibre, hay rich diet as this is essential for healthy guts and teeth. A small amount of dry food can also be offered.

As explained in your consent form *ileus* is now the main risk. It is important to be vigilant with your pets 'eating and pooping' after surgery. Ideally he should eat and pass some droppings the same night but it could be the next morning before he takes something. If your bunny is not eating and pooping by the day after surgery, you will need to bring him up to the surgery for a check up and possibly an injection to keep his guts moving. Fresh parsley, dandelions, pulled grass or sweet smelling hay can be used to encourage appetite. If bunny is feeling better, eating and passing normal hard droppings he can go into his usual clean living quarters, but please continue to monitor their progress. It may be wise to limit their activity for a few days.

We like to see all our patients for a post op check two days after the procedure to ensure all is well but you still need to check bunny at home. If your rabbit has had surgery it is wise to check the wound at least once a day. The wounds should just dry up and heal nicely, there should be no swelling, bleeding or signs of infection. All sutures should be in place. Flies must be kept away from wounds in the summer months.

Male rabbits can sometimes develop some swelling in their scrotum post castration. This is something the vet needs to be aware of as it may require treatment, so please telephone the surgery if this happens. Female rabbits will often seem very quiet after their spay and it is important they rest. Some vets will use a buried suture technique, as female rabbits will occasionally chew their stitches. If your rabbit has sutures that do not dissolve, you will need to return to the surgery in 10 days.

We hope your bunny has a speedy recovery, but if you have any problems or worries please telephone the surgery on (01246) 862266.