



## FERAL CAT RECOVERY

- Allow the cats to recover post-surgery. Males should be held for 24 hours & females 48 hours. Lactating females (female cats feeding kittens 6 weeks or less) can be returned the next day to allow them to care for their kittens. If the female has been lactating for more than 6 weeks, hold for the full 48 hours. This is to allow time for the drugs to leave the body. Cats should not be released while still affected by anesthesia as they cannot control their body functions and would not be able to escape a predator attack or a car strike.
- The cats will need some time to recuperate after their surgery, so keep them indoors in their covered traps. Make sure they're in a temperature-controlled environment—cats can't regulate their body temperature while recovering from anesthesia. Keep the cats away from loud noises including music, pets, and people. Do not let children near them. A warm basement or bathroom is fine.
- **Safety first! Keep the traps covered to ease the cats' stress. Never open the trap doors or let the cats out. As cute as they may look, don't stick your fingers through the bars or try to handle them when they are awake. A cat bite can be extremely serious.**
- **Call the Clinic if any complications arise (702-655-4800)**
- Monitor the cats. Check the cats often and keep an eye out for any bleeding, inflammation, infection, and lack of appetite. If a cat is vomiting, having difficulty breathing, or not waking up, get veterinary assistance immediately. Before the surgery, know how to reach the clinic beforehand if there are problems during recovery. If a cat is vomiting while still unconscious (asleep), turn their head to prevent choking. You can do this by gently tipping the trap to no more than a 30-degree angle. Be careful and don't jostle them too much.
- **Feed the cats the following day (early morning). Kittens can be fed small amounts of food and water after 7 pm the day of surgery. When feeding the cats, lift the back door of the trap slowly and only allow a small gap. Make sure you are in an enclosed area like**

a bathroom in case the cat escapes. Slide a plastic lid with a little bit of food on it through the gap—don't put your hand inside. You can also use an [isolator or trap divider](#) to do this, keep fresh newspaper in as well to give them some padding as they recover.

- Make sure all cats are fully conscious, clear-eyed, and alert before release. If a cat requires more than 48 hours of care, transfer them to a large crate or holding pen. You may also need to transfer a cat into a clean trap if the newspaper becomes soiled during recovery. Clean any soiled traps and reline them with fresh newspaper.
- **Return the cats to the same location where you trapped them. Early morning or late night is a good time, as it is quieter. Point the traps away from roads or high-traffic areas so the cats don't run into them. Open the front door of the trap and then completely remove the cover. If the trap has a back door, move the cover away and pull the door up and off (if possible with your trap), then completely remove the cover and walk away. Be careful to keep your distance and keep your fingers and hands as far from the cat as possible when opening the trap.**
- Once you have returned the cats, provide food and water. If you are the cats' caregiver, you can resume the cats' regular feeding schedule. The cats may stay away from the area for a few days after being returned, but they will come back eventually.