

Care Instructions for Your Recently Spayed or Neutered Rabbit



These instructions were given to you because your newly adopted rabbit has just been spayed (female) or neutered (male). These instructions will help you to know what behavior is normal after a surgery and any problems that may occur that require the attention of a rabbit-experienced vet.

When you bring Bunny home after surgery, he/she should be alert and responsive to you. Encourage your rabbit to eat after surgery. You can tempt Bunny by offering a small handful of greens such as Kale or Parsley. Always provide fresh grass hay (Timothy or Orchard) for Bunny to nibble on as well as limited plain pellets (no dried fruits or seeds in pellets) and a bowl of clean water. If Bunny has not eaten for 12 hours after coming home from surgery, contact your Veterinarian immediately. This could indicate a serious problem. **DO NOT WAIT.**

Your newly spayed or neutered rabbit should be housed indoors. This way, you will be able to watch Bunny more carefully and bond more closely as he/she begins to learn the new routine and learns to trust you.

Allow Bunny to rest in the cage or pen for 24 hours before allowing play time outside the cage. Limit Bunny's freedom at first to prevent injury from jumping around too much. Wait at least a week before allowing Bunny to play outside where there is dirt or anything that could cause an infection in the incision. If Bunny is allowed outside, supervise play at all times to keep Bunny safe from predators. Indoor housing is the safest for your rabbit.

Always keep your rabbit's cage and litterbox very clean. Check incision daily for swelling, excessive redness, blood or discharge. (*Note: Female rabbits will have an incision on their belly. Males will have a small incision on the testicles.*) Make sure Bunny is not chewing or pulling on the incision and make sure it remains closed up. If your rabbit was spayed (female) and staples or stitches need to be removed, contact your Veterinarian as directed - usually within 10 to 14 days. Do not leave staples or stitches in your rabbit. The skin will 'grow' over them and your rabbit will become infected. On male rabbits, the testicles will shrink over time and literally 'disappear.' The testicles might also become darker and shriveled during this process. This is normal and should be expected.

Hormone related behavior problems such as marking territory, not using the litterbox or aggressive tendencies will usually improve after Bunny has been spayed or neutered. It will take a few weeks for the hormones to settle down but you should see an improvement in these areas.

Please note: Male rabbits can still impregnate an unspayed female for approximately 60 days after surgery. We recommend not housing a newly fixed male rabbit with an unspayed female rabbit for several weeks.

CONTACT YOUR VETERINARIAN IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:

- Rabbit is chewing at incision
- Incision opens up or becomes red, swollen or has a discharge
- Rabbit has not started to eat after 12 hours of being home
- Stools are mushy or Bunny has true diarrhea
- Bunny is too quiet, depressed or weak or if Bunny remains in the back of the cage not moving around
- If Bunny is in pain, he/she may be hunched over, not wanting to eat and you may hear a loud 'tooth grinding' noise
- If Bunny seems to lose body heat and feels cool to the touch (check ears to see if they are cold)

To find a rabbit-experienced vet, visit: www.houserabbitga.org

For care information about your new rabbit friend, including tips on litterbox training, proper diet and supplies for your rabbit, contact the North Georgia Chapter of the House Rabbit Society at: 678-526-8884 or visit www.houserabbitga.org

Thank you for adopting your rabbit and saving a life!