

## Dog Spay Surgery, From Start to Finish

**What you need to know about this important procedure for dogs.**

*Maureen Kochan*

Is it expensive? Many veterinarians offer spay services as part of a puppy vaccination package. Some offer a spay day with reduced fees for those who demonstrate need. Many shelters and humane organizations provide spay vouchers or other funding to those in need.

When can my dog come home? Many vets will keep dogs for an overnight stay, but some may go home the same day. If you need to work and can't stay with your dog when she gets home, ask your veterinarian about an extended stay for observation.

How can I help my dog once she comes home? Keep her quiet and restrict unnecessary activity. Prevent excessive licking of the incision. Monitor food and water intake according to your veterinarian's instructions.

What symptoms should prompt me to call my veterinarian? A reopened incision. Abnormal swelling of the incision area (some swelling is normal). Dark red or purple discoloration. Bloody or thick discharge from the incision. Foul odors from the incision area, which could indicate an infection. Continued lethargy or if your dog doesn't seem to get better after a few days.

When can my dog resume normal activity? Most dogs are awake and alert soon after surgery. Some will eat the same day as surgery. Most resume normal activity within 3 days.

Spay surgery is an important part of responsible pet ownership, and an investment in your dog's long-term health. Have additional questions? Talk to your veterinarian today.

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