

## Community and Shelter Medicine

### Pre-Operative Instructions

*Your pet will undergo surgery to be spayed (females) or neutered (males) under general anesthesia. While this is a routine procedure, it should not be taken lightly, and we ask that you read and understand the instructions listed below.*

*This will help to ensure your pet has a safe and smooth experience with us.*

#### Preparing your animal for surgery:

- All animals should have free access to water up until surgery.
- Animals over 5 months of age **should not eat after midnight** the evening before surgery (no breakfast morning of surgery). Animals under 5 months of age can have a small meal the morning of surgery.
- If your pet (over 5 months old) does eat, please inform us at drop off (this is for your pet's safety).
- You must purchase an Elizabethan collar (lampshade collar) for all dogs and cats to wear during the duration of their recovery. Please plan ahead as pet stores are often sold out.

#### Drop off:

- All appointments must arrive on time at 8:30am. **Pets arriving late will not be accepted.**
- Expect to stay for approximately one hour (8:30am-9:30am) as everyone is checked-in. You will be outdoors during this time so please dress accordingly.
- Cats must arrive in a secure cat carrier. If you use a hard carrier, make sure the door(s) work and latch properly. If you use a soft carrier, make sure all zippers work. All carriers will be handed back to owners after each pet has their brief exam. Please plan to bring the carrier for pickup as well.
- Dogs must arrive on a leash. Please keep distance from other animals while waiting to be checked-in for surgery.
- All animals will undergo a brief pre-surgical exam at the time of drop off. If your pet is found to have anything that will affect surgery for the day, it will be discussed at that time.
- If your pet has any known pre-existing medical conditions you must inform staff before surgery. The veterinarian has the right to deny surgery for any reason they deem medically unsafe.
- **If your animal has a history of being nervous or fractious for handling, please inform staff beforehand – this is for the safety of our staff and your pet.**
- **An exact pick-up time will be communicated at drop-off. If pets are not picked up on-time after surgery, they are considered abandoned and will be brought to an ARL shelter where a late fee will be charged.**

#### Vaccination and Tattoo policy:

- Each pet will receive a Rabies and a Distemper vaccine unless a current and valid rabies certificate is provided.
- Under state law a veterinarian must vaccinate pets against rabies. Rabies tags and invoices will not be accepted as proof of rabies vaccination status.
- A small tattoo will be applied near the umbilicus (belly button) of each animal (male dogs will have their tattoo near their groin). This tattoo is a visual indicator of your pet's sterilization status, thus preventing unnecessary surgery later in life.

#### Animals in heat:

- If your animal is showing signs of heat before the appointment, please contact us to discuss beforehand otherwise you might be denied surgery that day. These surgeries are more prone to complications during and after surgery.

Please call 877-590-7729, or email [spaywaggin@arlboston.org](mailto:spaywaggin@arlboston.org) if you have any questions or concerns **prior to surgery**.

Please call the post-operative helpline at 857-350-8723 if you have questions or concerns **after surgery**.

*The Spay Waggin' is funded entirely by donations. Please consider donating to the Spay Waggin' so that we may be able to continue to offer this important service to others.*