

ABCESS AND WOUND CARE



Superficial wounds and abscess are some of the most common reasons pets are brought to the veterinarian. Fortunately, most wounds and abscesses heal quickly when treated, but there are possible complications. To help ensure a complete and speedy recovery please pay close attention to the following:

Behavior:

If your pet has had a sedative or been anesthetized to treat the wound, he or she may be rather sedate or lethargic for 12 to 24 hours afterwards. Please keep your pet in a quiet place where it can rest and sleep if it wishes. Cats should be kept inside and dogs kept on a leash when outdoors for the first night following anesthesia. If you suspect your pet will be hard to catch for treatment or your pet has a bandage, keep your pet inside or on a leash when outdoors until the wound is fully healed.

Wound care:

Check your pet's wound at least twice daily. Some drainage is usually expected the first few days but the amount should be decreasing daily. If you observe additional redness, swelling, or drainage that is not decreasing, please let us know.

Do not let your pet lick or chew excessively at the area. If you pet licks or chews excessively, please call the clinic. Some animals will require either an Elizabethan collar or "bitter apple" type spray to prevent them from bothering the wound.

Make sure to keep bandages dry and clean. A plastic bag can be placed over the bandage when you take your pet outside but do not leave it over the bandage for long periods of time.

If your pet's wound has stitches or skin staples, these will need to be removed in 10 to 14 days. Generally, this can be done anytime between 9 am and noon or between 2 pm and 5 pm and does not require an appointment. We do recommend calling before coming down to the clinic in order to avoid a wait.

Medication:

Usually, antibiotics are prescribed to help fight infection. It is important to follow the directions carefully. Make sure you give the full course of antibiotics that have been prescribed, even if your pet's wound appears to be healed. Stopping the medication early can lead to incomplete healing or antibiotic drug resistance.

While antibiotics are generally very safe, a few animals do experience side effects. The most common side effects are inappetance, vomiting, and diarrhea. Often giving the medication on a full stomach can minimize these. If your pet experiences side effects, please call the clinic.