

# Thyroid Mass Removal Aftercare Information

## Susan Hodge, DVM, DACVS-SA

**Surgery Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Surgery Performed:** Thyroid +/- mass removal: Right/Left/ Both

( X ) **FOOD AND WATER** Large intakes of food and water following a hospital visit are common due to excitement. The vomiting this often produces can be eliminated by no food or water for 2 hours.

( X ) A bland/special diet may be needed for a few days.

A bland diet such as Eukanuba Low Residue or Hill's I/D diet can be purchase or a home-made diet can be made with a 50:50 mixture of a cooked protein source such as hamburger, turkey, chicken, or cottage cheese (all fat removed) combined with a carbohydrate source such as rice, pasta, or mashed potato. We recommend gradually mixing the regular diet into this bland diet during the first week home.

### Medications:

( +/- ) **Fentanyl patch** (sizes available include 12, 25, 50, 75, & 100 ug patches): This is a clear plastic patch applied to your pet's skin for relief of discomfort or pain control. You will be instructed on when to remove the patch from your pet's skin (usually the date it should be removed will be noted). In most pets, the effects of this patch will work for about 3-5 days total (average of 4 days). It can be disposed of in two ways only, either place the patch in a plastic bag and return it to the office that dispensed it to you for disposal, or fold it in half, and flush it down the toilet. Do not allow pets or people to lick, eat or chew the patch because this may result in intoxication. The effects of the patch take 12-24 hours to either start to work or for the effects of the patch to wear off. Other medications can be used with the patch in place if needed and instructions on adjusting doses should be provided for you.

( +/- ) **Anti-inflammatory medications:** Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID's) include Rimadyl (Novox, Carprofen), Deramaxx, Metacam, Previcox, and others are available in either Brand name or generic forms: (tablet sizes or liquid concentrations vary depending on the product): The dose will be given in terms of the number of tablet(s), partial tablet, or volume of liquid (in mL) needed to be administered by mouth and the frequency will be noted for you (either every 12 or 24 hours) for 10-14 days as needed for pain control. These medications reduce inflammation, pain, and swelling. Do not give any other medications (particularly NOT Aspirin or steroids) with this medicine unless instructed by a veterinarian. Stop administering this medication if you notice any vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, or black tarry stool. The time of the next dose that this medication is due will be

noted on your discharge instructions (\_\_\_\_\_ am/pm). Some doctors prefer that this medication is not started until your pet leaves the hospital and is eating more normally.

( X ) Pain relieving medications: **Tramadol 50 mg:** The dose will be given in terms of the number of tablet(s) or partial tablet needed to be administered by mouth and the frequency will be noted for you (either every 8, or 12 hours) for 10-14 days as needed for pain control. This medication is an opioid and may cause sedation, mild constipation, or a decreased appetite. These side effects are related to the dose of the medication. Please call your doctor if you have concerns about any side effects. If a Fentanyl patch has been applied to your pet, this medication may not be needed until the patch has been removed, however it can be started with the Fentanyl patch at half the recommended dose (unless already at ¼ tablet dose) if needed. Please call if you have additional questions or concerns.

( ) The first doses are due about 8-12 hours after removal of the Fentanyl patch

OR ( ) The time of the next dose that this medication is due will be noted on your discharge instructions (\_\_\_\_\_ am/pm).

(+/- ) **Other: Antibiotics** may be administered if needed, depending on the case. The dose will be given in terms of the number of tablet(s)/capsule(s) needed to be administered by mouth and the frequency will be noted for you (either every 12 or 24 hours) for the appropriate number of days. Antibiotics would be used to prevent infection or treat contamination noted at the time of surgery. Any antibiotic may cause nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Most side effects can be minimized by administering the medication with food. The time of the next dose that this medication is due will be noted on your discharge instructions (\_\_\_\_\_ am/pm).

( ) Other:

**Additional monitoring: Although it is rare, we do recommend you monitor your pet for weakness, lethargy, tremors, or other odd behavior. This is uncommon following a single side thyroid mass removal, however if you have concerns, please call or have you pet evaluated by the Emergency Service. This would be the most likely to occur in the next 3-5 days.**

**Exercise:** Limit activity for the next 2-3 weeks. No jumping, running, or rough-housing with other pets or people. Your pet should be taken outside on a leash for bathroom purposes. Unrestricted activity may result in breakdown of the incision(s). **Please be careful with a neck leash as it may pull on the incision, in his situation you may let him outside in a fenced in yard with close supervision.**

Short walks are permitted on a leash only (10 minutes maximum) if you have a harness. Do not leave your pet off the leash or unattended outside during the time of exercise restriction.

**Incision:** Please check the incision daily for redness, swelling, pain or discharge. Please call if you notice opening of the incision, drainage from the incision(s), or swelling. Some swelling would be expected following thyroid mass removal. Do not allow your pet to scratch at the incision. If this occurs please obtain an Elizabethan collar from us, your regular veterinarian, or a pet supply store. Another option is to place bitter apple solution around the incision or place a t-shirt or a sock on the back feet (as long as you do not feel he will eat them) on your pet depending on the location of the incision and their tolerance of these pieces of clothing.

There are no external staples/sutures to be removed, but the incision should still be checked.

There are staples/sutures that need to be removed in about 10-14 days.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: Biopsies were submitted to the lab. These results should return in 5-7 days. Dr. Hodge will call with the results when they arrive. Additionally, copies will be sent to your regular veterinarian. Please call if you have not heard from Dr. Hodge in 7 days.

PLEASE RETURN your pet for an incision check (suture removal) in 10-14 days.