

## Feral Cat Program: Post-Surgical Recovery

Your feral cat or barn cat needs some time to recover from the anesthetic and from the surgery itself. Please keep the cat confined overnight inside its carrier and in a safe location, such as a screened-in porch, a basement, or a barn that is secure from other household animals and from predators. A cat may soil inside the carrier, but that is unavoidable.

If the cat is reasonably friendly and is able to be handled, we recommend that you keep the cat confined in a room for several days to allow for additional recovery time. Feral cats and barn cats need all their strength and wits to survive outdoors!

Cats may have water when you get home. *Remember that feral cats can be very aggressive and can also bolt out of the carrier as soon as you open the door.* If you can't safely provide water, then it's perfectly acceptable to withhold water overnight until the cat is released outdoors the following day.

Cats may have soft (canned) food tonight, say around 7:00 PM. Again, feed the cat *only if you think you can safely open the carrier door without having the cat bolt out (or attack you).* If you can't safely feed the cat, then it's perfectly fine to withhold food until the next day. If you *do* feed the cat, start with a small amount of canned food. If the cat eats it without vomiting, you can give additional food. Some cats will not have any appetite the day of the surgery, or will not be able to hold down the food without vomiting.

You can release the cat outdoors first thing in the morning the next day after surgery. Once the cat has been released outdoors, you should return to your normal feeding & watering schedule.