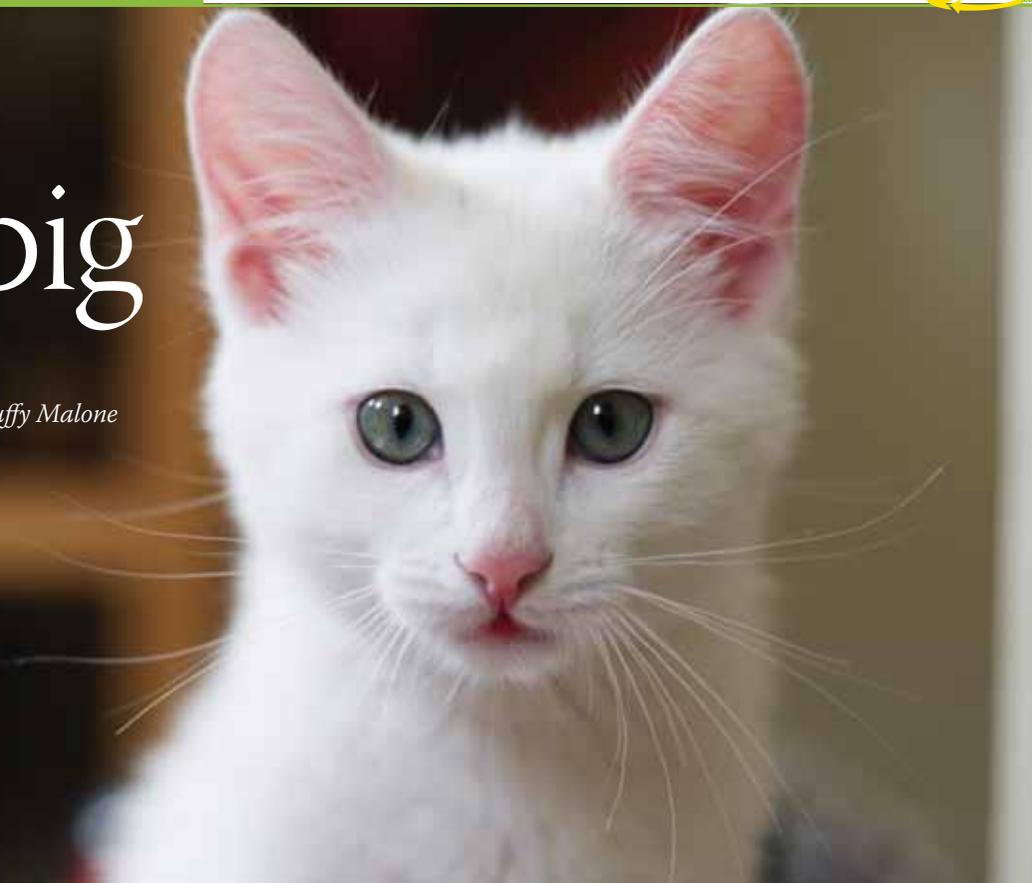


# My big day

By Fluffy Malone



**T**oday was a very special day for me. I had an orchidectomy, or “neuter” surgery, performed by Dr. Ward at Seaside Animal Care. This should help protect me from getting prostate cancer and other bad things when I get older.

My day started early when Dr. Ward and his nurses made sure I was OK to have surgery. They looked me over carefully and then took some blood samples for tests. Dr. Ward said he would run some blood tests to check for any problems inside that he couldn't see on my outsides. It only took a second and didn't hurt at all.

Next, a nurse came and put the a tiny needle in my arm called a catheter and hooked it up to a machine called an infusion pump. She was very gentle, and I didn't even know what she was doing until it was over! They gave me fluids in my arm and then they gave me something that made me feel sorta sleepy. They were all very nice and kept telling me how good I was being.

Dr. Ward came and told me that I was going to get very sleepy and that when I woke up, the surgery would be over. He told me that a nurse would watch me during the surgery, and computers would check my heart rate and rhythm (with an EKG machine), the oxygen levels in my blood (with a pulse oximeter), and how strong my pulse was, and make sure I was breathing OK. He said I would have a breathing tube in my mouth for oxygen and anesthetic gas (I think he said it was isoflurane) and that it might make my throat a little hoarse when I woke up. He said I would even have my nails done while I was asleep!

He gave me an anesthetic in the catheter, and I slowly went to sleep. It seemed like only a few minutes, but when I woke up, it was almost nighttime! I had a little bandage on and, boy, was I hungry. The nurse came in and asked if I was OK and wanted supper. You bet I did! I hadn't eaten since the night before. She also gave me something for any pain I might be having, though I felt really good!

Dr. Ward came in a little later to check on me, and I was getting really sleepy by then. He said the nurse called my family earlier and that they said they loved and missed me. He said I could go home tomorrow—if I promised to be good! >>>

The next morning they gave me breakfast and told me I need to follow these rules when I get home:

- 1  No jumping, running, or roughhousing for the next week.
- 2  Watch for any bleeding or discharge from my surgery site. A little swelling and redness is normal.
- 3  I may have some stitches that itch. Don't let me lick or scratch at them. If I'm persistent, call the doctor. He can suggest ways to make me stop, including medicine or an Elizabethan collar.
- 4  Clean my surgery site once daily with warm water—no alcohol or peroxide.
- 5  Make sure that I eat OK the next week. If I don't eat for two days in a row, call the hospital.
- 6  No bathing or swimming for 14 days.

- 7  I need to take any medications noted below until they are gone. Please be sure to ask the doctor or technician the best way to give these medications to me so that I feel better soon.
  - > Medication and dose: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Begin on \_\_\_\_\_
  - > Medication and dose: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Begin on \_\_\_\_\_
  - > Elizabethan collar is needed to stop your pet from bothering the suture site. Please use it according to the instructions given.
- 8  Please make the following appointments for me:
  - > Suture removal in \_\_\_\_ days, on \_\_\_\_\_
  - > Bandage check/removal in \_\_\_\_ days, on \_\_\_\_\_
- 9  Call if there are any problems at all. You can reach my doctor at: \_\_\_\_\_



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**So that was my big day.**

Everyone at Seaside Animal Care was so nice to me and made me feel special. They said I was a “Seaside Super Star” and was welcome anytime!

*Courtesy of Dr. Ernest Ward Jr., Seaside Animal Care, Calabash, N.C.*