

Project TNR
NJ's Humane Solution for Feral Cats



A program of
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Basic Guidelines for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)

The following are basic guidelines for TNR as advocated by Neighborhood Cats, Alley Cat Allies and the Humane Society of the United States—premier organizations working for feral cats.

1) Post-surgery recovery time

The recommended minimum post-surgery recovery time is 48 hours for males and females. Only if circumstances require, 24 hours is acceptable for males, but 48 hours is preferred. All cats should be checked prior to release to make sure they are alert and that there are no medical conditions requiring further veterinary treatment, such as severe upper respiratory infection, bleeding or excessive lethargy.

2) Holding/recovery space

The space in which the cats are held during the trapping and for post-surgery recovery should be warm, dry and secure. "Warm" meaning at least 65 to 70 degrees (especially post-surgery when the cats' body temperatures may be lower than normal), "dry" meaning protected from the elements, and "secure" meaning the cats are not accessible to other animals or anyone not associated with the project.

3) FIV/FelV testing

FIV/FelV testing is not recommended except when test results would be useful in diagnosing the condition of a symptomatic cat, or when a cat is being considered for adoption.

4) Vaccinations

It is strongly recommended that rabies vaccinations be administered. It is also recommended that other vaccinations, particularly FVRCP, not be administered because of the stress on the immune system of multiple vaccinations at the time of neutering or spaying.

5) Eartipping

Returned cats should be eartipped in accordance with the universal symbol of an altered feral cat - 1/4 inch off the tip of the left ear in a straight line cut.

6) Long-term colony care

Cats and their colonies who are TNR'ed should be provided with long-term care, including the provision of adequate food and shelter and consistent monitoring by a designated caregiver.

The goal of Project TNR is to introduce Trap-Neuter-Return to communities as the humane, effective and cost-effective method of controlling feral cat populations. Trap-Neuter-Return is a comprehensive program that will result in lower animal control costs, fewer to no births, reduction of nuisance complaints by residents and the alleviation of public health concerns.