

Preparing for Your Pet's Surgery

Most pets will undergo at least one surgical procedure in their lifetime. The most common procedures include desexing and dentals. We understand that you may be anxious or have questions regarding your pet's procedure. Below we provide information to help make the day easier for you and your pet.

Before the Surgery

- Book early to secure your preferred date. Routine surgeries are conducted Monday to Friday
- Ensure your pet's vaccinations are up to date prior to coming in to the Clinic.
- On the day of surgery, drop off is from **8.00am until 10am**. Please ensure your pet is in a **secure carrier or on a lead** for their safety and that of other clients.
- **Do not feed your pet on the morning of the surgery** or procedure requiring sedation. Remove access to all food after dinner the night prior. Water in the morning is fine.
- If your pet requires medication whilst in hospital, please bring that with you. Please inform our staff if your pet has been unwell in the lead up to the day of surgery.
- At the time of admission, the nurse on duty will weigh your pet and complete a surgery consent form for you to sign. We also require a contact number for you on the day of the surgery.

Blood Testing

At Animal Tracks **we strongly recommend pre-anaesthetic blood testing** prior to your pet undergoing any surgical procedure. Blood testing allows us to detect any hidden abnormalities in the blood. We can then adjust our anaesthetic procedure accordingly to reduce risk and safeguard your pet's health. All pets benefit from a pre-anaesthetic blood test, from the very young to the very old, as abnormalities can occur at any age. We offer a basic pre-anaesthetic screening to check liver and kidney function or a Total Annual Health Profile, which covers a larger spectrum of measures of your pet's health. Please note a basic pre-anaesthetic blood test is included in the cost of all our dental procedures.

Would You Like a Nail Clip with That? (Other things to consider on the day)

Whilst your pet is sedated, it is a good opportunity to catch up on other maintenance such as nail clipping or even teeth cleaning. Usually these things can be done whilst your pet is asleep and blissfully unaware. It can also save you money by combining procedures and not requiring a separate anaesthetic at another date. Please inform our staff at the time of booking if you would like to include other procedures on the day of your pet's surgery.

Anaesthesia

Most surgical procedures require a day stay in hospital and a general anaesthetic. We take numerous precautions before and during the anaesthetic to ensure your pet's safety.

The first thing we do is examine your pet to ensure it is safe to give the anaesthetic. This is very important. The anaesthetic drug is injected into a vein in the front leg (we usually clip a small amount of hair off the leg to do this). Within a few seconds this makes your pet go to sleep, relaxes their muscles and stops them feeling any pain. We then put a special tube (ET tube) into their trachea (windpipe) and connect them to a machine that delivers oxygen and a precise amount of anaesthetic gas to keep them asleep. The patient is monitored during surgery and the gas level can be adjusted if necessary.

Common Surgical Procedures

1. Cat or Dog Spay (Female desexing)

We generally recommend dogs and cats be desexed at 4-6 months of age (females before their first season or heat). Once female cats and dogs are on heat, reproductive tissue is more fragile and bleeding increases, making surgery more complicated.

A spay is the surgical removal of a female pet's reproductive organs (ovaries and uterus). The abdomen is shaved, cleaned and a small incision is made just below the belly button. The ovaries and uterus are removed through the incision. Three layers of stitches are used to securely close the wound: first a row of dissolving stitches in the muscles, a second layer under the skin and then finally the skin sutures. The skin sutures will need to be removed 10 days after surgery.

2. Cat or Dog Castration (Male desexing)

In dogs the fur is shaved, cleaned and an incision is made just in front of the scrotum. Each testicle in turn is pushed forward out of the scrotum and lifted out. The blood vessels and spermatic cord are tied with dissolving sutures and then the testicle can be removed. After this, the tissues under the skin are stitched together using a layer of dissolving sutures. The final layer of sutures is placed in the skin and these are removed 10 days after surgery.

For cat castrations the fur is shaved from the scrotum and surrounding skin. The testicles are removed from a small skin incision in the scrotum and the blood vessels and spermatic cords are tied to stop bleeding. The incision in the scrotum is so small it does not require stitches. There may be mild swelling but it should not be excessive. For male cats we use intravenous anaesthetic, not anaesthetic gas.

After the Surgery

Surgery normally takes place between 12 – 3pm. We will contact you once your pet is awake and alert after the anaesthetic. We will then arrange a discharge time (usually after 4pm the same day). At the discharge appointment we will go through the after-care details with you including any medication if required. Please bring a \$20 cash deposit for the 'Elizabethan collar' (worn to protect the wound and sutures). The deposit is refundable when the collar is returned in good condition.

After reading this information, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our staff at the Clinic on 9764 6066 or via email animaltracksvet@gmail.com