

Preparing Your Pet and You for Elective Surgery

Anesthesia and surgery can be a stressful time for you and your pet so we want to help prepare both of you for it.

What do I need to do to prepare for surgery?

- Since this is major surgery and is stressful to your pet, we require that all pets be current on vaccines for all contagious diseases before surgery for their protection and the protection of all pets in our hospital. If the vaccines were not given here, we require documentation from the licensed veterinarian who gave them.
- Please take up food by **10:00 p.m.** the night before surgery, (water may be left down) and bring your pet to the hospital between **7:00 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.** on the day of surgery. For your convenience, you may bring your pet the night before surgery at no additional charge.
- Please plan to spend a few minutes talking with the surgery technician when you bring in your pet.
- We require a phone number where you can be reached (not an answering machine), so that we may contact you after surgery is completed or if we have any questions.

What will happen while my pet is at the hospital?

- We check your pet to be sure s/he is a good candidate for anesthesia and surgery and draw a blood sample if you have elected to do pre-anesthetic testing. If your pet is 5 years old, or is having major surgery, pre-anesthetic testing is required.



- If no problems are noted, we will give your pet an injectable anesthetic agent. In some cases, this will be the only anesthetic needed. In other cases, we will place a tube in your pet's trachea to deliver gas anesthesia.
- Your pet will be monitored carefully while under anesthesia and during recovery. During surgery, we use electronic equipment to monitor heart and respiratory rate and/or blood oxygen content. Surgical technicians will always be at your pet's side during surgery.
- The surgery technician who assisted with the surgery will try to call you after your pet has recovered from anesthesia. If you have not heard from us by 1:00 p.m., please feel free to call to check on your pet.

Is there any risk associated with anesthesia and surgery?

We will never be able to eliminate all risks from anesthesia and surgery in humans or animals, but modern anesthetics and monitoring equipment, combined with years of experience, make complications very rare.

When do I pick up my pet, and what do I do then?

- Neuters are usually ready to go by 4:00p.m.on the day of surgery.
- **Do not** allow your pet to have free access to food or water for the first few hours after they get home.
- **Do not** allow your pet to have free exercise for the first few days after they return home.
- All surgical patients at Clanton Animal Hospital receive pain medication while in the hospital. Should the need arise for us to dispense pain medication when you pick up your pet, you will receive directions on the dosage, the time to give the medicine, and potential side effects of the medication.
- Your pet could be a little lazy or sleepy, and some pets may not eat or drink normally for a few days. However, most pets act as if nothing has happened to them. Be sure that they are going to the bathroom. Constipation can be a problem in some cases.
- Please call us if you notice any bleeding or excessive swelling from the incision or if your pet seems in pain, lethargic, or is very depressed.



When will my pet need to have sutures / staples removed?

In many cases, we will place a special suture pattern under the skin that does not have to be removed. Occasionally, if a pet licks at this type of incision excessively, the skin may open a little bit. **Please call if this happens.** This is usually not a problem since there are two more layers of sutures under the skin.

Suture / Staple removal appointments are scheduled prior to leaving the day of surgery. A return visit is made for 7 - 10 days. While routine suture / staple removal is included in the surgery fee, there is an additional fee for sedation if it is needed.

Please do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions.

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