



In preparation for your pets scheduled anesthetic procedure, ***please take some time to read through the information below.*** Specific instructions regarding fasting and drop off will be emailed in a few days.

SURGERY, ANESTHESIA AND YOUR PET

Anesthesia is a controlled unconsciousness, where your pet's level of consciousness is controlled so they don't feel pain or move during surgery. We certainly don't want our pets to feel pain whenever possible, and it's important that they don't move. Precision is required during these procedures and movement could lead to complications. Most healthy pets - even senior pets - don't have any problems with anesthesia. Anesthesia for animals has come a long way and is safer than it ever was before, and a well-trained veterinary team further reduces your pet's risk.

Anesthetic Risk

Like any medical procedure, anesthesia does have risks. These risks can run from minor problems, such as mild vomiting after recovery from anesthesia, to life-threatening problems such as cardiac arrest or stroke. Although complications can occur, anesthesia-related deaths are rare. Our veterinary team will take all of the necessary precautions to ensure that your pet is safe and can handle anesthesia.

In emergency, life-threatening situations, the risks of anesthesia are usually minimal compared to the risks of not performing the emergency procedure. For elective procedures, there's more opportunity to postpone anesthesia if some risks that are present can be reduced by treatment prior to the anesthesia and procedure.

Preparing for Surgery and Anesthesia

Prior to surgery and anesthesia, your veterinarian will perform a thorough physical exam on your pet, review your pet's medical history, and discuss any risk factors. Pre-operative blood tests are highly recommended to check for any indications of anesthetic risk.

What happens after my pet is admitted to the hospital in the morning?

On the day of surgery and anesthesia, a pre-surgical exam will be performed by your DVM and run in house pre-operative blood work if indicated. An intravenous catheter is placed to allow administration of fluids and medications.

When will my pet be ready to be picked up from the hospital?

Alongside your pet, 2-5 other patients are also admitted daily for surgery and anesthesia. The order in which patients undergo their procedure is determined by each DVM on the morning of surgery. This means that we cannot give an accurate time of surgery or discharge for your pet at admission. As the order is not set until the morning, we require all patients to be dropped off first thing in the morning to be prepped and ready for their turn. We understand the anxiety of having your pet wait hours in the hospital for their surgery, however we endeavor to keep them comfortable, rested and potty walked throughout their stay here with us. We will keep you updated (via text) throughout the day to alert you to when your pet's surgery is starting, ending, or if their surgery is proceeding in the afternoon.

Before Surgery and Anesthesia

Your pet will be given a pre-anesthetic sedative to reduce their stress and ease the anesthetic process. The anesthetic may be delivered by gas inhalation (using a gas anesthesia machine), intravenous infusion, or a combination of the two.

During Surgery and Anesthesia

While under anesthesia, your pet will receive monitoring and care comparable to what you'd receive if you underwent anesthesia. This includes:

- intravenous fluids and/or medications to support your pet's circulation and blood pressure
- an endotracheal (breathing) tube inserted into your pet's trachea (windpipe) to deliver the anesthetic gas and provide oxygen to your pet's lungs
- pulse oximetry to measure the oxygenation of your pet's blood
- capnography to measure the CO₂ in your pet's blood
- blood pressure monitoring
- temperature monitoring and warming blankets to prevent hypothermia (low body temperature)
- electrocardiography (ECG, also called EKG) to monitor your pet's heart

After Surgery and Anesthesia

Pets are closely monitored post-operatively to make sure that they are recovering normally and so care is provided quickly if there are any problems. Pads and blankets are used to keep your pet warm during the recovery. The endotracheal tube is removed when your pet is awake enough to swallow normally. Fluids and/or medications may be continued through recovery if indicated.

Your pet will be sent home later in the day, once adequately recovered from anesthesia.

What Can You Do to Reduce Your Pet's Risk?

- Let your veterinarian know if your pet has ever had a reaction to sedation or anesthesia
- Make sure your veterinarian is aware of all medications and supplements (including over-the-counter products) your pet is receiving
- Keep your pet healthy with regular preventive care
- Keep your pet at a healthy weight
- Follow your veterinarian's instructions before anesthesia, especially with regards to withholding food and/or water
- Follow your veterinarian's instructions regarding any medications you should – or should not – give to your pet prior to anesthesia

We ask that you please keep your phone on and be available in the event that we need to reach you on the day of your pet's surgery.

Please let us know if you have any questions, and a surgical team member will be happy to assist!

Best Regards
Soundview Veterinary Hospital