



Frequently Asked Questions For the Elective Surgical Patient (Spay and Neuter)



Why can't my pet eat breakfast prior to surgery?

Many of the anesthetic agents or drugs used during anesthesia and surgery can cause nausea and vomiting. If the patient's stomach is not empty, they could vomit and aspirate (inhale) the vomit, which could cause life threatening pneumonia. Water is okay for our patients to drink right up until presented to the clinic. Water clears quickly from the stomach and the risk of vomiting is much less. In our climate becoming dehydrated is a greater risk. Please advise our staff if your patient inadvertently ate the morning of surgery so we may take extra precautions and preventative measures.

Why do you want to do blood work if my pet is young and healthy?

Although your pet is young and apparently healthy, there could be a condition that has not been identified yet. This condition may be in early stages or low grade, when your pet undergoes the stress of surgery and anesthesia, the condition could suddenly worsen. Such conditions might include congenital (from birth) problems like renal dysplasia (kidney malformation), liver disease either congenital or from an ingested toxin, low plasma proteins or anemia. It is also important for all the organs to be functioning properly to metabolize or clear the drugs given during anesthesia or during post-operative pain management.

Remember our pets can't talk, so blood screening is one of the few ways we have to look inside the body and make sure all systems are function as they should.

What is an IV catheter, and Why do you want you want to place it in my pet?

An IV or intravenous catheter is a small synthetic, sterile device placed in the vein of your pet to allow direct and immediate access to your pet's blood stream. We prefer to place the catheter in your pet's front leg or arm, this seems to be the most comfortable place to have a catheter. During anesthesia and surgery it is ideal to have direct and immediate access to the blood stream to administer medications if your pet were to have a crisis. Such a crisis may be an allergic or anaphylactic reaction to one of the anesthetic drugs or a physiologic drop in blood pressure, or hemorrhage (profuse bleeding) at the surgical site. When a catheter is placed for anesthesia and surgery it is our protocol to also provide intravenous fluid therapy during the procedure. The IV fluid therapy helps support the physiology of blood pressure and assists the body's clearance of anesthetic drugs. In short, they usually recover faster and feel better after surgery with IV fluid therapy during an anesthetic procedure.



Frequent Asked Questions (Cont.)

Why do you give us a choice in the method of your health care for my pet?

We believe that every pet should be spayed or neuter. It is important to understand that the surgical procedure for spaying and neutering is an invasive, painful, difficult surgery to undergo. We offer you the very best for your pet. We also understand that not everyone can afford minimizing risk in veterinary medicine. That is why we offer blood work and IV catheter with fluids as an option.

Why do you ask for a CPR and DNR status?

CPR = CardioPulmonary Resuscitation

DNR = Do Not Resuscitate

People have different beliefs. So please do not be insulted by the question. We all love our pets, but each of us view life and death differently. It is important that we understand your point of view. If a patient were to have a cardiac arrest during surgery, we *always* make initial attempts to revive the patient. If you choose the CPR option, we will continue CPR, if possible, until we reach you regardless of prognosis for your pet. CPR can be expensive and invasive. Statistics show that animals requiring more than 3 minutes of CPR rarely are discharged from the hospital.

Why does my pet need to stay all day if the surgery is done in the morning?

It is imperative that your pet is kept quiet with minimal activity for the hours following surgery. This period of inactivity assures that ligatures placed on major blood vessels stay in place. It is also very important that the anesthetic agents are completely cleared from your pets system prior to leaving the hospital.

What should I prepare for my pet in the post-operative period?

The first night after surgery, your pet will likely be uncomfortable from surgical pain, may remain groggy from anesthetic drugs and pain management drugs, and will need a quiet, secluded place to rest. They should be kept away from other pets and small children, as they may be grumpy or less tolerant of annoyances. In the days to follow they will require rest from playing, jumping, and running for 10 days. If your pet is active or rambunctious you should consider setting up a kennel to restrict their activity. They will not require a special diet.

We appreciate your concerns and are here to help.
Please don't hesitate to ask.

