

BigCreek PetHospital

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Your Pet's Surgery

Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your pet. Our team has been involved in 1000's of successful procedures, in fact we estimate Dr. Fegan has done more than 10,000 surgical/dental procedures. However, there is always a small risk, less than .2%, of complications during the surgery. To minimize problems, we follow a series of steps when we do a surgery or dental procedure-using anesthesia. If you have any questions about the specific procedure we are doing for your pet please ask us.

Step 1 – Examination & Testing

Your pet will be given a pre-surgical examination on the morning of their procedure, to ensure that they are healthy. During the pre-surgical exam, your pet will also receive an Electro-Cardiogram (EKG) to check to ensure your pet's heart is strong and stable.

We also strongly recommend that bloodwork be done prior to any anesthetic procedure and is required for all pets 7 years and older. Pre-anesthesia bloodwork allows us evaluate your pet for any underlying problems that may require us to modify our anesthetic or surgical plans (**See the reverse side about Pre-Anesthesia Bloodwork**).

Step 2 – Pain Meds prior to surgery

Prior to most surgeries, your pet will be given pain medications. These are used to help relax your pet before receiving anesthesia and also to minimize pain to the area being operated on. (Ex. Declaws receive a "Ring Block" that deadens the feeling to the paws.) During the surgery prep we may also hook-up IV fluids for senior pets and "at-risk" pets.

Step 3 – Surgery Prep

The procedure begins in our Treatment Room. Your pet will receive Isoflurane gas anesthesia. (Isoflurane is very safe and is used for many human surgeries.) If needed, the surgical area will be prepared by shaving the fur down to the skin.

Step 4 – Actual Procedure

All invasive surgeries (such as spays, abdominal exploratory, and orthopedics) are done in our sterile Surgery Suite, using aseptic technique (mask and gloves). Minor/non-invasive procedures are done in the Treatment Room. During the procedure, a Registered Veterinary Technician assists the Doctor and monitors your pet during both the surgery and recovery. If desired, you can watch your pet's surgery. Please let us know ahead of time so we can schedule a mutually agreeable time.

Step 5 – Recovery

After the procedure is completed, your pet will be transferred to a holding area where we can monitor your pet. We will be watching your pet to ensure there are no post-surgical complications. You can expect a call from one of the medical staff when your pet is in recovery. They will let you know how the procedure went and set-up a discharge appointment for you. (In the event that you do not receive a phone call by 4:00 pm, please call us.)

Step 6 – Discharge

When you come to pick up your loved one, we will escort you to one of our exam rooms to discuss the surgery and post-surgery instructions. During the discharge we will explain how the surgery or dental went along with explaining how much food your pet can receive the night following the procedure, exercise restrictions, special needs, and what you should be watching your pet for. You will also receive a written report reiterating these items. Finally, we will go over your invoice and receive payment.

Step 7 – Post-Surgical Follow-up

We will call you the business day following a procedure to check on your pet and answer any questions you may have since the discharge. If you have any concerns or questions about your pet and the procedure call us (440-234-5831).

Pre-Anesthesia Bloodwork

What is Pre-anesthesia Bloodwork?

Pre-anesthesia bloodwork consists of two tests of your pet's blood, a Complete Blood Count (CBC) and Routine Blood Screen.

Why Get Pre-anesthesia Bloodwork done?

This helps identify possible problems with your pet that may not be evident during the physical examination. If your pet has abnormal test results, we may take special precautions during the surgery or even reschedule it. Normal bloodwork also gives us baseline data that we can refer to if your animal becomes ill.

What does the Complete Blood Counts (CBC) show?

This test evaluates the 3 major blood cell types: red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets

The red cells are the oxygen carrying cells. A low RBC (red blood cell count) can indicate blood loss through hemorrhage or destruction of the cells by parasites, toxins or the body's immune system. It can also be a sign of an underlying chronic disease.

The white cells are the infection fighting cells. An increased WBC (white blood cell count) can be an indication of a bacterial infection, inflammation, parasites, or cancer. A low WBC is often a sign of a viral infection or severe bacterial infection.

The platelets are important in clotting the blood or stopping bleeding. A low platelet count can cause serious bleeding problems.

What does the Routine Blood Screen show?

Our Modified Blood Chemistry evaluates liver and kidney values and the blood glucose, or blood sugar level. Abnormal values may mean that the liver or kidneys are not functioning properly. Changes in blood sugar or blood glucose can be caused by diabetes, infection, or cancer. We may recommend further testing to completely evaluate your pet's health. Depending on the severity of the problem, we may give fluids or other medications during your animal's procedure or postpone the procedure until the abnormality has been corrected.

Does this really need to be done now?

If your animal is 7 or older we require the bloodwork be done each time anesthesia is used. We do this to ensure the health of your pet and to make the anesthetic procedure as safe as possible. If your animal is younger than 7 we strongly recommend bloodwork be done. It can help us to identify an underlying disease in its earliest stages. It also gives us valuable baseline data if your pet becomes ill. We can refer back to the bloodwork results to see what is normal for your pet's body.

How long is this test good for?

We accept pre-anesthesia bloodwork if it was done within one month of the procedure.

If you have questions about pre-anesthesia bloodwork and the benefits of these tests for your pet's health or if you would like to have these tests done prior to the procedure please ask us.