

Your Pet's Surgery Day at Glenway Animal Hospital

Surgery and anesthesia can be intimidating and confusing for many pet owners. To ease your concerns we have developed this step-by-step explanation of what we do and why we do it. We encourage you to call with any questions you have! The staff and doctors of Glenway Animal Hospital want you to feel completely comfortable with the procedures your pet will undergo.

A few days before surgery, one of our technicians or assistants will collect a small amount of blood from your pet for laboratory analysis and collect a performance ECG (electrocardiogram). The results come back the very next day and will tell us whether or not your pet is suitable for surgery. The bloodwork also helps the veterinarian decide what type of anesthesia and pain medications should be used in the best interest of your pet. The electrocardiogram is faxed to a specialist. Once both the bloodwork and electrocardiogram results are back, the doctor will call you with the results and to let you know whether everything looks good for surgery.

The day before your pet's surgery, a staff member will call to inform you of any necessary fasting instructions for your pet. Fasting prevents your pet from inhaling food or water should your pet vomit during anesthesia. The only exception to our fasting protocol is with rabbits as they cannot vomit so fasting is not required.

On surgery day, patients are admitted to the hospital in the early morning. They are given a soft towel to lie on until their procedure time. As surgery time draws near, a veterinarian gives all patients a complete pre-operative physical exam. Next a technician or assistant will check the patients' temperature and draw a small amount of blood to run a dehydration/anemia check to make sure that your pet's blood is clotting normally. Finally, an intravenous (IV) catheter is placed in your pet's front leg. This catheter allows us to administer anesthetics, IV fluids and pain medication easily and quickly with minimal stress to your pet.

Intravenous medications are used to induce anesthesia. Once your pet is anesthetized an endotracheal tube is placed in their throat. This tube provides oxygen and gas anesthesia to your pet throughout the surgery, it also protects their airway. With both the IV catheter and breathing apparatus in place we will be able to closely monitor your pet throughout the surgery. During their procedure one of our trained staff will be by your pet's side focusing on monitoring your pet. We continuously monitor heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory rate, ECG and pulse oximeter.

Heart Rate	The number of times your pet's heart beats in 60 seconds. This is checked using a stethoscope every 3-5 minutes.
Respiratory Rate	The number of breaths your pet takes in 60 seconds. This is also checked every 3-5 minutes.
Blood Pressure	We check this every 3-5 minutes using a blood pressure cuff attached to one of their rear legs.
Electrocardiogram (ECG)	This displays your pet's heart rhythm and is measured by using three connecting clips attached to their legs. These clips stay attached at all times so we can constantly monitor this.
Pulse Oximeter	This measures the percentage of oxygen in your pet's blood stream and is measured using a connector, which is placed in their tongue and also stays connected at all times.

As your pet's procedure draws to a close, they are taken off the gas anesthesia. When your pet is able to swallow, the endotracheal tube is removed. They are carried back to the cages where they are given a warm, soft towel and a fluffy pad to lie on until they are fully awake. The staff member who has been monitoring your pet will remain by their side until they are fully awake and responsive. Once awake, our staff will continue to keep a close eye on your pet for the rest of the day.

Once the anesthetic procedure is complete, and your pet has woken up, the doctor will call and let you know how your pet is doing. Before going home, your pet's IV catheter will be removed and a colorful "Band-Aid" will be placed on their leg. When you come to pick your pet up, you will be given personalized home care instructions for your pet informing you of any precautions to take and things to watch for at home. Any medications your pet will need will be sent with you along with instructions for administering. We will call you the next day at home to check on your pet and make sure that they are doing well and also to answer any questions you may have.