

Surgical Procedure Guide

Your pet should be fed dinner no later than 9 p.m. the night before surgery. They must not be fed the morning of the surgery—this includes any treats! They can be allowed access to water all night; however, they should not be allowed to drink large amounts the morning of surgery.

Your pet should be dropped off for all anesthetic procedures between 7:30 and 9 a.m. the morning of the scheduled procedure.

Once your pet has been checked in, our technician will shave an area of one of the front legs and place an IV catheter. This is done to ensure maximum safety during anesthesia. The IV catheter will be used to deliver the initial anesthetic agent for induction, so that the doctor can place the endotracheal tube. This tube will be used to deliver the inhalant anesthetic agent, and will also be used for IV antibiotics, IV fluids, and will ensure that the doctor can give any IV medications necessary in the unlikely event that problems arise during the anesthesia.

A laser is used to make incisions in a majority of our surgeries. Laser energy seals nerve endings as it moves through tissue. The result is that your pet will feel less pain post-operatively. The laser seals small blood vessels during surgery which limits bleeding. Laser energy does not crush, tear or bruise, because only a beam of intense light contacts the tissue.

Depending upon the type of the procedure, your pet may have external sutures that will need to be removed in 10 to 14 days. You may bring your pet in at any time after that period and our technicians will remove the sutures. There is no charge for this. If at any time before that period you are concerned about the surgery site—for example, if there is swelling or discharge—please call and we will schedule a time for the doctor to recheck your pet. There may be a charge for this if your pet has chewed out sutures or staples and they need to be replaced. We highly recommend the use of an Elizabethan collar if your pet is likely to disturb a surgery site. You can purchase one here or at Petco and Petsmart. Your pet may have a bandage. Please make sure you know what day the doctor would like you to come in to have the bandage removed/changed. You may want to schedule that appointment upon picking up your pet from surgery. If the bandage becomes wet, you will need to come in sooner to have it changed.

Depending upon the type of procedure, your pet may be required to stay overnight. This is to keep your pet medicated, confined and observed so that the recovery is smooth. Our technicians are able to do the treatments at frequent intervals, such as cold or warm compresses, IV injections for pain or antibiotics, and are experienced in dealing with animals recovering from anesthesia. The veterinarian will do a full physical exam the evening after the surgery as well as one the following morning. We are not staffed overnight; however, the staff does not leave the hospital unless all the animals are stable and fully awake. The animals will be fed a light evening meal and a full breakfast. Male cats do not require an overnight stay for neutering. If you do not want your pet to stay overnight, your pet can be transferred to a 24-hour veterinary hospital at your expense.

Post-operative instructions will be provided upon picking up your pet. They will print out on your invoice—please do not discard it! If you have any questions regarding care of your pet, please ask! You may also request that the doctor do an estimate the day before the procedure.

Thank you for entrusting the care of your pet to us at Belle Haven Animal Medical Centre. We will do our best to ensure that your pet's procedure is as stress-free as possible for both you and your pet.

Please visit our website at www.bhamc.com.