**SURGERY AND ANESTHESIA**

We know it can be a bit scary when you leave your pet with us to be placed under anesthesia for a surgical or dental procedure. This page is to help you understand and be more comfortable with anesthesia and surgery for your pet.

It is important that surgery be done on an **empty stomach** to reduce the risk of vomiting during and after anesthesia.  You will need to withhold food for at least 8 to 10 hours before surgery.  Water can be left down for the pet until the morning of surgery.

Every pet will receive a **pre-surgical examination** prior to surgery; this is important for a number of reasons. The exam gives us information that lets us know if your pet is a candidate for surgery at this time. If an animal has an infectious disease, a heart murmur, inherited abnormalities, or is weakened from parasites, the pre-surgical exam will expose these complications. An exam will let us know that your pet is healthy and able to tolerate the surgical procedure.

Although there is always some risk when using an anesthetic, it is much safer than in the past and even for aging pets the risks are minimal. We will **tailor the anesthesia** plan based on your pet’s age, weight, and overall health. Every pet has a trained professional that monitors your pet’s heart rate, respiratory rate, oxygen level, temperature, and depth of anesthesia during the entire procedure and throughout the recovery process.

In human medicine many **screening and monitoring procedures** are totally dictated by the doctor and insurance companies. We understand that not everybody is able to financially choose to have every recommended screening and monitoring procedure done for their pet. Based on your pet’s age and health, our veterinarians can partner with you in determining what of these options will be best for you, your pet and your finances

**IV catheter and fluids:** This is one of the very best things to help prevent and minimize anesthetic problems. This keeps your pet hydrated and helps maintain blood pressure. If any problems occur it also gives quick access for proper medications to be given.

**Blood pressure monitoring:** It used to be very difficult to accurately measure pet’s blood pressure. Recent technological advances have made blood pressure monitoring very reliable. Blood pressure is one of the first things that will change if there is a problem with anesthesia.

**Pre-Anesthetic Blood Tests:** These check for things such as anemia, dehydration and organ function. Based on the results the anesthetic plan may change or even be delayed until any underlying problems are corrected.

**Electrocardiogram (ECG):** This monitors the heart rate and rhythm. If there are any changes from the normal rhythm, the anesthetic can be changed or medications given to correct the problem. This is especially important if there are any underlying heart problems.

We know that any surgical procedure will cause some pain and discomfort. Every patient receives pain medication before surgery, during the procedure as needed and during recovery. We will also send home medication to control pain and keep your pet as comfortable as possible.

We offer the choice of using a **surgical laser** for many procedures. The benefits of a surgical laser over a scalpel are **decreased bleeding, swelling and pain.**

We also offer the use of a **therapeutic laser** to help **minimize pain and speed healing** after a surgical procedure.

When you come to take your pet home, our staff will go over specific written care instructions and answer any questions you may have.