

What to Expect on Surgery Day

The decision to have your family member placed under general anesthesia to undergo a surgical procedure is often difficult and should not be taken lightly. While there have been numerous advances in veterinary medicine that have decreased the risks associated with anesthesia, there is still a small, but realistic possibility that your pet may experience some complications. At Sunset Blvd. Animal Clinic we understand your concern and will do everything we can to minimize these risks. To help you better prepare for your pet's procedure and recovery, we ask that you please take a moment and read this handout so that you will know what to expect.

- **Pre-anesthetic Blood Testing:**
 - Helps reduce the risks and complications of anesthesia by ruling out many internal problems, including clotting disorders, liver and kidney abnormalities and anemia, which may otherwise go undetected.
 - We ask that you bring your pet in two or three days prior to their procedure so our trained technicians may collect a blood sample and submit it for testing
 - This allows our doctors to receive and interpret the results prior to surgery day
 - If you are not able to come in before the procedure, we have laboratory equipment in-house that will allow us to perform a blood screening. However, this screening is more costly and not as comprehensive.

- **Pre-surgery Instructions:**
 - The night prior to your pet's procedure, we ask that you with hold food after 10 pm, and do not feed your pet in the morning
 - You may still offer your pet some water, however avoid letting them drink a large quantity of water prior to coming to the clinic

- **Admission to SBAC:**

Please understand admission is based on a first come basis, so please allow at least 15 minutes to admit your pet into our clinic.

 - We ask surgery patients be admitted to our clinic between 7:30 and 8:00 am.
 - If you are not able to arrive by 8:00, please inform a receptionist so that we will know when to expect your pet's arrival.
 - Upon arrival, you and your pet will be escorted to an examination room and asked to complete a form detailing your pet's procedure and outlining any options regarding your pet's visit.
 - Please read this form carefully, and sign at the bottom when you are finished.
 - A surgery technician will meet with you to answer any questions you may have about your pet's procedure.
 - Also, we ask you to leave a telephone number where you can be reached during the day so that we may inform you on your pet's progress or any concerns that may arise.
 - Once your pet is admitted, our trained technician staff and experienced doctors will care for your pet throughout the day and make sure they are comfortable.

All pets admitted for a surgical procedure will receive:

- **Pre-surgical exam:** The doctor will perform a comprehensive physical exam. This exam will assist in determining that your pet is healthy and is an ideal candidate for a surgical procedure. While your pet may have been recently examined, our doctors will complete an additional exam just to be sure a new issue has not occurred.

- **Pre-operative Medications:** A mild sedative will be administered to help your pet relax. A pain medication will also be administered at this time to help control any pain that may result from the procedure.

- **Intravenous catheter and fluids:** An intravenous catheter is a tube placed directly into the vein which allows the doctors to administer fluids. These fluids will keep your pet hydrated, as well as help maintain blood pressure. Having an IV catheter in place also provides quick access to administer any medications that may need to be given in the event a complication occurs.
- **Surgical Monitoring:** In addition to continuous observation by the surgery technician, your pet will also be monitored with state of the art equipment, including an ECG to monitor heart activity, a non invasive blood pressure monitor, and a pulse oximeter which measures heart rate and oxygen concentration levels.
- **Pain management:** All pets are given injections to alleviate pain they may experience during their procedure. Your pet's pain levels are also continuously monitored after their procedure and additional medications are administered as needed. If the doctor feels your pet would benefit from additional pain medication after they are released, a prescription will be sent home with you.
- **Post-surgical supervision:** After your pet's procedure is completed, one of our trained team members will monitor your pet to ensure they are warm and have a smooth recovery.

Once your pet's procedure is completed and is recovering comfortably, you will be contacted by the doctor or one of our caring technicians. During this call, you will be informed of the outcome of the procedure, and when your pet will be able to go home.

- **Discharge:**
 - When you pick up your pet, you will be given instructions to follow to aid in your pet's recovery. Please read these instructions carefully and let our staff know if you have any questions.
 - You may also need to give your pet medications at home following the surgery, please make sure you are comfortable with all of the instructions, and know if there are any side effects associated with the medications.
 - Please do not hesitate to ask our staff if you are unsure of any instructions, or if you have any questions regarding your pet's procedure or recovery.