

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOUR CAT'S UPCOMING SURGERY

Many people have questions about various aspects of their cat's surgery and we hope this information will help. It also explains the decisions you will need to make before your pet's upcoming surgery.

1. IS THE ANESTHETIC SAFE? Today's modern anesthetics and anesthetic monitors have made surgery much safer than in the past. We do a thorough physical exam on your pet before administering anesthetics to ensure that a fever or other illness won't be a problem. We also adjust the amount and type of anesthetic used depending on the health of your pet.

Type of Anesthetic Gas: There are two different types of anesthetic gases available. Isoflurane has been used for several years in human and veterinary medicine. It has less suppressive effects on the respiratory and cardiovascular systems than some of the older anesthetic gases. It is very safe and is recommended for patients of all ages, especially for older and debilitated pets. Isoflurane is the standard gas we use at our practice and the cost is included with the price of the surgery.

Sevoflurane is a relatively recently developed gas anesthetic. At this time it is the safest gas anesthetic available on the veterinary medical market. It is recommended for very old pets, or patients with severe or serious illness such as heart, kidney or liver disease.

2. BLOOD PROFILE AND URINALYSIS Pre-anesthetic blood testing is important in reducing the risk of anesthesia. Every pet needs blood testing before surgery to ensure that the liver and kidneys can handle the anesthetic. Even apparently healthy animals can have serious organ system problems that cannot be detected without blood testing. If there is a problem it is much better to find it before it causes anesthetic or post-surgical complications! Animals that have minor organ dysfunctions will handle the anesthetic better if they get intravenous fluids during surgery. If serious problems are detected, surgery can be postponed until the problem is corrected. To avoid and minimize any anesthetic risks, we offer and recommend blood testing and urinalysis prior to any general anesthetic. Reasons why your cat should have a pre-anesthetic blood test and urinalysis include:

- **Blood Profile:**
 - Maximizes the safety of the anesthetic and the surgical procedure*
 - Identifies those "at risk" patients before administering anesthesia*
 - Gives information about internal organ systems that may not be detectable on a physical exam*
 - Gives determine the patient's readiness for surgery*
 - Aids veterinarian in choosing the right type of anesthetic agent*
 - Signals the likelihood of any anesthetic complications and allows for appropriate preparation*
 - Establishes baseline values*
 - Peace of mind*
- **Urinalysis**
 - Supports the findings of the blood test*
 - Detects inflammation or infection of the urinary tract*
 - Screens for risk factors in the development of Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease*
 - Determines if the cat's diet is appropriate for prevention of lower urinary tract disease*

3. FELV/ FIV TESTING Feline leukemia virus and Feline AIDS (FIV) are contagious life-threatening viruses. All cats should be screened as even healthy cats can be carriers of these deadly viruses. Indoor/outdoor cats are at the highest risk, however kittens can be born infected from transfer of the virus in-utero from their mother.

4. FLUID SUPPORT General anesthesia will decrease blood pressure and suppress the cardiovascular system. If blood pressure falls very low, some organs may suffer from lack of blood circulation, and lack of oxygen. Fluid support is the primary means of maintaining normal blood pressure. Other benefits of fluid support include:

- immediate access to the intravenous blood circulation for administration of drugs in case of an anesthetic emergency
- additional hydration for elderly or debilitated pets
- additional hydration for patients undergoing long surgical procedures such as major abdominal surgery or dental work

5. WILL MY CAT BE IN PAIN? Anything that causes pain in people can be expected to cause pain in animals. Cats may not show the same symptoms of pain as people do - they don't usually cry out but you can be sure they feel it.

Pain management in veterinary medicine has improved significantly. Recent advances in the understanding of pain recognition and management have underscored the importance of providing adequate pain relief in veterinary patients. Appropriate pain control has become an integral part of all our medical and surgical management.

There are two main choices for post-surgical pain control. The first is a pain control package which includes a post-surgical pain-killing injection administered by the veterinarian, followed by administration of tablets every 8 to 12 hours for 2 to 5 days following surgery. The pain treatment package is recommended for mild to moderately painful procedures such as neuters, spays and dental extractions.

The second option is the application of a Duragesic skin patch. The patch is applied at the end of the surgical procedure and provides a continuous release of pain-killing medication for a total of 5 days. To prevent premature removal or chewing the cat must wear an Elizabethan collar until the patch is to be removed. The patch is most commonly recommended for more painful procedures such as declaw surgeries, mature spays and other major abdominal surgeries. The patch is not recommended if you have small children at home who may accidentally ingest the patch.

6. IDENTIFICATION If you have ever lost a pet, you know the emotional pain it can cause. Pet loss can be avoided by a simple procedure such as a tattoo or microchip implant. We offer and encourage you to have your pet permanently identified, even if he/she lives strictly indoors, since accidental escape can and does occur to many responsible pet owners.

Tattoos are done inside the right ear, and are relatively inexpensive. They are done under general anesthesia. The only disadvantage of a tattoo is that they are only good for the city of Calgary and the surrounding area, as tattoo codes change from region to region. Tattoos can also fade and become illegible over time.

Microchips are the new wave of pet identification. They can be implanted under general anesthesia or with your cat awake. Once implanted, your cat will not know it is there, and the chip is completely invisible. They do not cause any side-effects or long-term problems. Each chip is given a unique number or code that can be read by a microchip scanner. The code is linked to your name, address and phone number in the chip company's computer data base. This information can be updated at any time if you move, and the chip will work almost anywhere in the world. All veterinary clinics and animal shelters scan cats for microchips.

7. WHAT OTHER DECISIONS DO I NEED TO MAKE? While your pet is under anesthesia is the ideal time to perform other minor procedures such as nail trimming, ear cleaning, and dental cleaning. For pets six to eight months old this is also an ideal time for a fluoride treatment of the new adult teeth, to help strengthen the enamel and lessen dental problems later on. We will ask you about these extra procedures when you bring your pet in. If you would like an estimate for these extra services, please call ahead of time. This is especially important if the person dropping the pet off for surgery is not the primary decision maker for the pet's care.

When you bring your cat in for surgery, we will need 5 to 10 minutes of your time to fill out paperwork (unless you do it at home) and make decisions on the type of the anesthetic, blood testing, fluid support, pain treatment and other options available.

We will call you the night before your scheduled appointment to confirm the time you will be dropping off your cat and to remind you to fast your cat after 10:00pm the night before the general anesthesia. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to call us with any questions about your cat's health or surgery!

For more detailed information please contact our office at 246-1115 or visit our website: catdoctor.ca



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