



## Surgery And Pain Management



We strive to make surgical visits as smooth and stress-free as possible for both you and your pet. This starts even before your pet comes in for surgery with a comprehensive physical exam and pre-anesthetic bloodwork. This helps us to be sure that your pet is healthy for anesthesia, as well as screening for other, potentially more important, pre-existing conditions.

The morning your pet comes in for surgery, the doctor will examine him or her again to be certain nothing has changed with their condition. Sedative medications are given to relax your pet and ease discomfort before the anesthetics are given. A certified veterinary technician (veterinary nurse) monitors your pet's vital signs throughout the entire procedure – start to finish. We use only the safest Isoflurane gas anesthetic (similar to what human hospitals use). Your pet will also have an IV catheter and fluids throughout the procedure to protect the liver and kidneys; furthermore, it allows us to administer any medications if immediate action is needed. We practice multi-modal pain control, and provide analgesic medications pre-, intra-, and post-operatively to make sure your pet is as comfortable as possible. In addition to the general anesthesia, a local nerve block is administered at the surgical site for declaws and abdominal surgeries to give longer analgesia. Extra pain medications will be sent home to ease the first few days after surgery.

As additional options for your pet's surgery, we have an Ellman Radiosurgery unit and a therapeutic laser for post-op treatments. The Ellman uses focused radiowaves instead of a scalpel to simultaneously cut and cauterize tissues, sealing small blood vessels and nerves. It is similar to a surgical laser in that way, but better! After surgery, you may choose to have us perform a therapeutic laser treatment on your pet's surgical site. This is different than a surgical cutting laser – the therapeutic laser uses more diffuse heat to relax the muscles, stimulate healing, and provide natural pain relief. If you would like more information on either option, please ask.

Since waking up from anesthesia can be a disorienting experience, a technician or assistant will stay with your pet during recovery to keep them relaxed and comfortable until fully awake. S/he is then returned to a blanketed kennel to rest until it's time to go home. The surgeon will call you to let you know how surgery went, answer any questions, and schedule a time for a release consult. During the release appointment, a technician will go over any medications (like pain control) to be given at home, as well as giving you a complete set of written discharge instructions for at-home care. We work hard to answer all your questions before your pet leaves the hospital, but if something comes up, please don't hesitate to call! The day after surgery, we follow up with a progress call to ensure your family member continues to do well post-operatively. Thank you for entrusting your pet's care to us. We truly do care for your pets as if they were our own.

