

What to Expect: Surgery

Making the appointment:

Please call our office at 718-302-2420 to schedule an appointment for a pre-surgical exam. At this appointment we will perform a full physical exam, run pre-surgical blood work, make an accurate estimate, and prescribe any necessary medications.

Why is a pre-surgical exam important?

1. **Heart and lung problems:** If your pet has a heart murmur or other cardiovascular problems, it can affect anesthesia. For some pets, if their heart problem is too severe, surgery is not recommended.
2. **Run pre-surgical bloodwork:** Blood work results can affect what type of anesthetic or IV fluids we use. Sometimes the results are so serious that we do not recommend performing surgery. When this is discovered the day-of-surgery, it can be inconvenient for pet parents who have taken off of work for the surgery day.
 - a. Liver and kidney function: these organs are the body's filters and if they are not working properly, we want to use a different kind of anesthesia and administer IV fluids before, during, and after surgery to help the liver and kidneys flush it out.
 - b. Blood sugar: Diabetes can prevent healing, so it is important to know if a patient has diabetes before surgery. Also, precautions need to be taken during surgery to monitor blood sugar.
 - c. Electrolytes: If these are too low, we would give a different kind of IV fluids during surgery.
 - d. Heartworm test: Heartworm disease can cause serious complications during surgery.
 - E. Vaccines: We require all pets are up to date with vaccines (emergency surgeries excluded)
3. **Making an accurate estimate:** Many factors influence the cost of surgery that are nearly impossible to tell over the phone. For this reason, we cannot guarantee accurate estimates before performing a physical exam.
 - a. Example: A growth removal's cost is influenced on where the growth is located on the pet, how large it is (a small wart or a baseball), what kind of growth it is (benign, malignant), and whether or not we are sending a sample out for biopsy.
 - b. Example: A dental cleaning's cost is influenced on how long it will take to clean all the teeth (how much tarter is on the teeth), how many teeth may need to be extracted (pulled), and if any dental suturing is required.
 - c. Example: A routine spay and neuter cost is influenced by the pet's weight, body condition score (normal or overweight), the age, and whether or not she is in heat or the testicles hasn't dropped.

4. **Prescribe medications:** Depending on the procedure, medication may be required prior to the day of surgery.

Before Surgery Directions:

Please see the bottom of this page for our location and directions.

What to bring:

Paperwork: When scheduling your appointment, please ask the receptionist if any forms are needed for prior to your pet's procedure.

Medical Records: If they could not be faxed to us ahead of time.

Medications: your pet is taking

Food: A small amount of your pet's regular food (for exotics or pets staying overnight).

Pet's Personal Items: Please withhold bringing toys, blankets or clothing unless suggested.

Confirmation: You will receive a phone call the day before your appointment to confirm and remind you to **withhold food and water the night before surgery.**

NOTE: We have a fair surgery "No-Show" Policy which is enforced, so please be sure to call us at least 24 hours prior to your appointment if you need to reschedule to avoid being charged a fee.

The Night Before: Please feed your pet dinner the evening before surgery, but no food or water should be given after 12 midnight before surgery. **Be sure to pick up food and water bowls and remove any food or garbage cans your pet could get into.**

Exceptions:

1. **Pets on medications:** Please feel free to call us the day before or ask during the appointment confirmation if you aren't sure whether to give a medication the morning of surgery.

2. **Exotic pets (birds, pigs, rabbits, rats, etc.):** Require food and water regularly, do not withhold food and water unless otherwise informed.

Admit for Surgery

Check-in:

Please allow at least 20-40 minutes in your schedule to admit your pet for surgery. You will be warmly welcomed by a member of our team who will handle the surgical paperwork, take a brief medical history (i.e. when did your pet last eat?), and answer any questions you may have. Unless your pet requires a pre-surgical exam, your pet will be taken to the treatment area of our hospital and settled into his or her kennel for the day. Then our receptionist will collect a deposit and ask you to call us at 4:00pm for a discharge time; please inform our staff if you will be sending someone else to pick up your pet and provide their information.

Vitals and Bloodwork: Our Veterinary Technicians will be assisting the doctor in the care for your pet from start to finish and is happy to answer questions even days after the procedure. They will record your pet's vitals and weight and begin the medical record for the procedure. If we have not done blood work before surgery, we will do so after your pet is admitted on the day of surgery. If results are normal, we will proceed. If they are abnormal, you will receive a phone call to discuss the results. We require pre-surgical blood work in all of our surgery patients.

Patient Evaluation and Planning: If your pet did not have a pre-surgical appointment, he or she will be examined the doctor in the morning. Based on physical exam findings, patient history, and blood work results; the doctor and technician will make an individual surgery plan for your pet.

Preparing for Surgery: Some procedures may require intravenous fluid therapy; in which case, an IV catheter is needed, this will require the technician to shave an area to apply the catheter. We recommend IV catheters to be placed in all of our surgery patients over the age of 5 years. The technician will trim your pet's nails and clean your pet's ears (we perform courtesy nail trims and ear cleanings with all anesthetic procedures). Please expect the area that the doctor will perform surgery to have a shaved area.

Post-Op & Recovery: Each patient is different and some pets take longer than others to fully come out of anesthesia. Most patients are discharged between 4:00pm-6:30pm.

Patient Discharge: The receptionist will check you out and alert the technician you are present. The technician will discuss the procedure and post-op instructions. He or she will go over how to feed your pet, whether your pet has sutures and when they need to be removed, how to restrict activity, any medications or bandages, and when to return for a recheck. He or She will give you written instructions to take home and ask you if you have any questions. After all your questions are answered, your pet will be discharged. Be sure to set up an appointment for your post-operative recheck before leaving. We will call you the following day to check on your pet and answer any questions.

Post-Operative Recheck: All post-op rechecks are included in the cost of the procedure. If you are even the least bit concerned about your pet following a procedure, please do not hesitate to call and come in if possible or make an appointment. There will be no charge for the exam. However, if your pet requires additional medications, bandages, sutures or treatment these items will be charged. For routine procedures we like to see patients back within 7- 10 days. For non-routine or emergency procedures we like to see patients the following morning. Sutures and staples usually cannot be removed until 10-14 days after the procedure.