



GENERAL ANESTHESIA FOR YOUR PET

General anesthesia is required for your pet's surgery. We recognize that general anesthesia can be of great concern to our pet owners. We do everything we can to minimize the risk, alleviate your fear, and provide your pet with a safe anesthetic procedure.

Preparation for anesthesia

The preparation for your pet's general anesthesia begins long before any drugs are administered. First there will be a thorough evaluation of your pet's medical history and a complete physical exam. Recommended pre-anesthetic blood tests will be performed prior to the procedure. After reviewing the results of the physical exam and blood work, additional tests may be recommended if indicated such as chest x-rays, abdominal ultrasound or echocardiogram. While completion of pre-anesthetic testing does not eliminate all of the risk associated with general anesthesia, it does allow us to tailor an anesthetic protocol specifically for your pet.

Pain management

Pain management is one of our top priorities for your pet. A pain management plan will be started before the procedure and usually a combination of drugs are used to manage pain in different ways. This kind of pain management has been shown to decrease the amount of general anesthetic necessary for your pet and hasten recovery. We also utilize local and regional anesthetic blocks, which numb the incision or surgical area prior to surgery. At discharge, pain medications may be dispensed for you to administer to your pet at home in the days following the procedure.

The day of the procedure

Prior to general anesthesia, your pet will be weighed and examined. An intravenous catheter will be placed in the vein in one of their legs. A small patch of fur may be clipped to place the catheter. A short-acting anesthetic drug will be administered to your pet through the catheter to allow placement of an endotracheal tube. This tube allows your pet to breathe a combination of isoflurane and oxygen to maintain general anesthesia. Intravenous fluids will be administered during the procedure which assists in maintaining blood pressure. Your pet's body temperature will be controlled with a warm water circulating blanket and a warm air convection blanket. Body temperature, electrocardiogram, heart rate, respiratory rate, blood oxygen level and blood pressure will be monitored by our equipment, the doctor and technician throughout the procedure.

Most animals recover from general anesthesia within minutes after the procedure has been completed, but your pet will not be left alone during their recovery no matter how long it takes. If needed, additional medications are administered post-operatively to help keep our patients comfortable and ensure a smooth recovery. Depending on the procedure most of our patients will be released prior to 5:30pm the same day as the procedure. They will be up and walking, although they may still be a little groggy.

Although we can never guarantee the outcome of any general anesthesia, we do everything we can to minimize the risk and we treat each of our patients as if they were our own pets.

Updated 6-28-17