



Does Your Pet Need Surgery?

Surgeries can be scary, for both you and your pet. That’s why at East Padden Animal Hospital, our focus is on surgical excellence, customized compassionate care and open communication. Our surgical team uses cutting-edge equipment in a state-of-the-art surgical suite combined with extensive training to make sure your pet receives the highest quality of care.

Surgical FAQs

1. What is a pre-surgical intake?

A pre-surgical intake is how we gather information about a patient before performing a surgical procedure. At East Padden Animal Hospital, we aim to complete these intakes the day before surgery. This not only saves you time the morning of surgery, it also gives you a chance to receive feeding & medication instructions tailored to your pet, inform us of which reminders you would like to update (such as rabies vaccines, or fecal tests) and which treatments you would like to add on while your pet is here (such as anal gland expression or ear cleaning.) If you are unable to complete the intake the day before, one of our trained surgery members will do so the morning of surgery.

2. Does my pet need to fast before surgery?

Yes. Please withhold food for at least 8 to 10 hours before surgery. Just as in human medicine, it’s important that your pet have an empty stomach to reduce the risk of vomiting during and after anesthesia. Water can be made available until the morning of surgery.

3. Do I give my pet their medications before surgery?

If your pet is on chronic medication, continue medications as normal. They can be given with a small bite of food if needed. There are, however, medications that should NOT be given before anesthesia. Please refer to the chart below, however it is always important to let our staff know what meds your pet is getting so we can give you accurate instructions.

DO GIVE	DONT GIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thyroid medication • Pain medications (ie Rimadyl, Gabapentin, etc) • Anxiety medication (ie Fluoxetine, Trazodone) • Heart medication (ie Pimobendan, Furosemide) • Antibiotics • Steroids • Anti-seizure meds (i.e Phenobarbital, Keppra) 	<p>Blood pressure medication (Amlodipine, Benazepril, Enalapril)- discontinue the day of anesthesia to avoid refractory hypotension during anesthesia</p> <p>Anticoagulants (Aspirin, Clopidogrel) - withhold for 2 weeks before anesthesia to prevent excessive bleeding</p>

4. What is the check in process?

Please plan to arrive as close to your scheduled drop off time as possible. When you check in at the front desk, our lobby coordinator will hand you a consent form to fill out while you wait for your surgery tech. If you completed your pre-surgical intake the night before, your surgery tech will complete the process by reviewing your consent form, going over your estimate, and taking payment for the low end of your signed estimate, as well as answering any of your lingering questions. If you did not complete your pre-surgical intake the day before, your surgery tech will bring you and your pet into a private exam room to complete the entire process, which takes roughly 15 minutes.

5. How long will my pet be at the hospital?

The short answer is: potentially all day. Procedures are started between 9 am and 5pm. After preoperative exams are completed, the doctor determines what order to perform surgeries based on our patients' age, health, and urgency of procedure. For example, a lifesaving procedure will go before a routine neuter. Go home times typically start around 4 pm and are dependent on what time your pet's procedure was completed, and how fast they recover from anesthesia. All patients go home prior to closing at 8 pm.

6. How do I receive updates about my pet?

Your pet's surgeon will call you after they are finished with their procedure. Roughly an hour after that, you will receive a call from a trained surgical technician to go over discharge instructions and set up a go home time. Surgery updates are sent via text around noon and 3 pm for pets whose procedures have not yet been completed. You are always welcome to call or text us at 360-892-1500 if you would like additional updates.

7. Will my pet be sedated?

Yes. Your pet will go under anesthesia for most types of surgery; however, some minor surgeries such as laceration repairs, may be performed with sedation and local anesthetics. While your pet is under anesthesia, we can perform other routine procedures, such as dentistry, spays/neuters, and mass removals.

8. Is anesthesia safe?

Yes. Today's modern anesthetic monitors have made surgery much safer than it was in the past. At East Padden Animal Hospital, we do a thorough physical exam of your pet before administering anesthetics, as well as pre-anesthetic blood testing to ensure the liver and kidneys can handle the anesthetic. We adjust the amount and type of anesthetic used depending on the health of your pet. For geriatric or ill pets, additional blood tests, electrocardiograms, or x-rays may be required before surgery as well.

9. Will my pet have stitches?

For many surgeries, we use absorbable sutures underneath the skin that will dissolve on their own and do not need to be removed later. Some surgeries, especially tumor removals, do require skin stitches that are usually removed 10 to 14 days after surgery.

10. Will my pet be in pain?

Patient safety and comfort are our main priorities. Our experienced veterinary technicians provide skilled pain management during and after all surgical procedures, ensuring your pet recovers quickly and with minimum discomfort. Pain medications needed will depend on the surgery performed. Major procedures require more pain relief, however, any animal that appears to be experiencing pain will receive additional medication.

11. What does post-surgery look like?

Most animals are very groggy after their surgery and will recover from the anesthesia 24-48 hours after their procedure. We'll call you as soon as your pet wakes up and let you know when you can pick him or her up. We will provide personalized home care instructions on food, medications, activities, and recheck instructions. Some pets may experience soft stool or changes in their appetite for a few days which are normal. If you have questions, please call us at (360) 892-1500.

12. Can my pet go back to normal activities post-surgery?

It depends on the type of surgery your pet received, but we'll give you specific instructions at discharge. Typically, you'll need to limit activity for 10 – 14 days, use an e-collar to prevent your pet from licking the incision site, keep the incision dry (no baths or swimming for 10 days), and call us at (360) 892-1500 if your pet appears to be in pain.

13. Will my pet need to come back to be re-checked?

Your pet may need to come back for a re-check depending on the type of surgical procedure and how well they are healing. We will let you know when your pet is discharged. If you're worried about the incision or surgical site, bring your pet in for a complimentary recheck or send us a picture to make sure things are healing appropriately.

We understand surgery is a stressful time for any owner, and we're available every step of the way to answer questions and put your mind at ease. Please call us at (360) 892-1500 if you have any questions.