



8 Important Pieces of Information to Know About Your Pet's Surgery at Duxbury Animal Hospital

Pet owners are curious about what is involved when their pet is placed under anesthesia, especially when costs appear to vary from clinic to clinic. Shelters and other low-cost clinics provide an invaluable service to the community by providing surgical care at a minimal expense to people with limited financial means. However, in order to do so, many costs are cut by providing lower quality medications, less supportive care, and little to no surgical monitoring equipment. Additionally, unbeknownst to most pet owners, many private clinics also cut these important safety steps in order to advertise lower prices.

At Duxbury Animal Hospital, you can be sure that your pet will receive only the best and safest anesthetic and surgical care. When considering any clinic for your pet's surgery, make sure that the clinic you choose is following these 8 crucial procedures.

1. Pre-anesthetic Blood Work:

There are countless abnormalities that can only be discovered with laboratory analysis. Therefore, prior to anesthesia, we recommend blood work that is specific to your pet's age, condition, species, and breed. This allows us to catch and treat underlying diseases that could lead to serious and potentially fatal complications during anesthesia.

2. Pre-surgical Reviews and Documentation:

24-48 hours prior to your pet's procedure, our surgical team reviews your pet's medical records and builds a surgical plan based on your pet's specific history. This plan, tailored to your pet's specific needs, ensures the safest possible procedure.

3. Intravenous Catheter:

All but a very small number of patients coming to Duxbury Animal Hospital for a surgical procedure will have an IV catheter placed. This is an important access point for intravenous fluids, pain medications, antibiotics, and anesthetics. More importantly, in the rare event of an anesthetic complication, this saves valuable time by allowing us to quickly administer medication.

3. Fluid therapy:

Just like human medicine, our patients receive fluid therapy during their procedure. This is important for maintaining blood pressure and the health of many of your pet's vital systems. Along with the IV catheter, this step is often skipped at many clinics. Our team recognizes the importance of this supportive care and what it means to the safety and well-being of your pet. In many cases, the patients will also receive fluid therapy before and after their surgical procedure.

4. Physical Examination:

All pets receive a full physical examination immediately prior to anesthesia. This prevents possible complications from any conditions that may have developed since the time of their last exam. It is also another important step in the series of "safety checks" that our team uses to ensure that all procedures are performed correctly.

5. Pre-medication:

These are medications that are given prior to the induction of anesthesia and are meant to decrease pain, anesthetic risk, and risk of infection. They typically include a combination of the following:

- Cardiovascular Support:* These drugs will ensure that the heart rate, blood pressure, and respiratory rate stay normal while all parts of the body receive appropriate blood supply.

- Pain medication:* While patients don't "feel" pain when under anesthesia, it has been proven that the nervous system does still respond to pain. When this is not controlled, it can lead to many difficulties both during and after surgery. Therefore, pets usually received multiple forms of pain medication prior to surgery. While many clinics still do not feel the need to provide any pain control, we will always ensure the utmost comfort for your pet while under our care.

- Sedatives:* Sedatives are used to decrease your pet's anxiety during the induction procedure. This early sedation also allows us to use significantly less anesthetic agents during the actual surgery, greatly reducing the risk of complications

- Antibiotics:* While not all pets will undergo procedures require antibiotics, pets that do will usually receive an injectable antibiotic prior to surgery. This prevents infection during the surgical procedure.

6. Induction and Maintenance:

Pets at Duxbury Animal Hospital are induced into anesthesia the same medications used in human medicine. Many clinics choose to use older, more dangerous anesthetics as a way to cut costs. Our team feels that the health and safety of your pet should always come first and will only ever choose the best, state-of-the-art anesthetics for our surgical procedures.

7. Monitoring:

We utilize multiple pieces of state-of-the-art veterinary-specific monitoring equipment to check and record vital signs such as heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels, respiratory rate, temperature, and electrocardiogram throughout your pet's entire time under anesthesia and through recovery.

8. Post-Operative care:

Your pet is never simply left to recover in a cage. Our team stays with them until they are fully awake from anesthesia and then perform regular checks of vital signs, pain management levels, and wound care. Many patients remain on intravenous fluid therapy to continue their support through the recovery process. Their comfort and safety will be our top priority throughout the day.

