



Preparing for a Surgical or Dental Procedure

Your pet will be undergoing a general anesthesia, what does this mean?

General anesthesia has come a long way in the past decade and continues to become safer with newer drugs and monitoring techniques available. General anesthesia is when the patient loses consciousness and is typically used to allow surgical procedures. Many anesthetic agents are drugs given by injection to help achieve a surgical plane of unconsciousness. Inhalant gases delivered with medical oxygen are commonly used to help maintain a level of unconsciousness for the patient throughout the procedure.

While the patient is asleep during anesthesia, our registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) are busy monitoring all vital signs of the patient and ensuring they are kept comfortable. Medical records and charts are kept for each patient with their monitored recordings. Our RVTs are with the patients and monitoring and recording their heart rates, respiratory rates, ECG (electrical activity of the heart), blood pressure, oxygen saturation of the blood and temperature throughout the procedure. This way we are able to spot any trends and adjust medications as needed to keep your pet safe and comfortable during the anesthetic procedure.



All anesthetic patients receive IV fluids, which keeps them well hydrated throughout the procedure. It allows for IV access to administer medications such as pain medications and helps to maintain normal blood pressure. We can even use IV fluid warmers to warm the fluids being given to help keep your pet warm during the anesthetic.



Pain control is very important to us at Nanaïmo Veterinary Hospital. An individualized pain control protocol is created and tailored for the needs of your pet. This will often mean that pain medication is administered prior to the procedure in the form of an injection to help prevent pain. We will administer pain medications as injections during and after the procedure as necessary for your pet's customized pain treatment plan. Local anesthetic nerve blocks are often used to "freeze" the area in which surgery will be performed so your pet will wake up not feeling discomfort in the area. Pain medications are sent home with you to continue the pain management plan for your pet at home over the next few days following the procedure. This will ensure that they remain comfortable before, during and after the surgical or dental procedure.



Risks of anesthesia

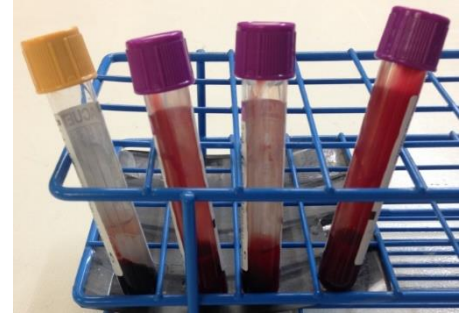
Just like using any medications, there are some risks associated with general anesthesia. This is why we do our best to mitigate that risk and make it as safe as possible for your pet. In order to help our doctors, create a customized anesthetic



protocol for your pet, preparation is often needed. A physical exam is very important to assess your pet's overall health and assess the heart and lung sounds for any abnormalities.

If heart disease is known or suspected, cardiac investigation may be discussed to ensure optimal heart health for the procedure.

An internal exam of the function and health of the organs is recommended by collecting a blood sample to analyze. The complete blood count (CBC) will assess the red blood cells for signs of anemia, white blood cells for signs of inflammation or infection and platelets for signs of possible clotting disorders.



The biochemistry will assess the sugar levels for signs of diabetes, the kidney values for kidney health and function, the liver values for liver health, electrolytes and blood protein levels. A thyroid level may be assessed for hormonal function of the thyroid gland. A urinalysis may be recommended to help assess the function

of the kidneys by determining the concentration of the urine and to assess for signs of urinary tract infections that may be more common in older patients or patients who have dilute urine.



Should your pet have any abnormalities noted on their blood or urine, these abnormalities will be discussed with you to determine what may need to be done in preparation for the upcoming surgical or dental procedure. Our goal is to ensure the highest quality of care and provide safe and effective anesthesia and pain control tailored to each pet's needs. The safety of your pet is of utmost importance.

Certain medications can cause changes to the blood results including changes to clotting capabilities or have interactions with other pain medications or anesthetic. Please notify us if your pet is on any of the following medications and when they were last administered: Aspirin, Heparin, CBD, prednisone/prednisolone or other steroids.

In preparation for anesthesia, we will call you the day before to discuss feeding or fasting instructions. To reduce chances of regurgitation after anesthesia, many pets are asked to skip the breakfast meal the day of the surgery but are still permitted water until the morning of the anesthetic. If your pet has known disease, there will be special pre-anesthesia instructions for them.

During your admission appointment with one of our RVTs, you will be asked about your pet's fasting, when they last ate, what other medications they are taking and when last given and any other concerns.

We know that it can be scary to have a loved one undergo surgery. Our goal is to make this experience as stress free for you and your beloved pet. While preparing for the upcoming surgery or dental procedure, please let us know of any concerns or questions you may have. We can be reached by phone at 250-758-3985 or by email at nveth@shaw.ca.