

Patient Instructions (surgery, x-rays, ultrasound, endoscopy or blood tests)

We know that admitting your pet to the hospital for any procedure is stressful for both of you, and it can be hard to remember what you need to do. Although the doctor may have given you individualized advice, here's a list of routine instructions:

All patients must be evaluated by a doctor before undergoing a procedure requiring sedation or anesthesia. This examination may have taken place during an office visit, or at the time you scheduled your procedure. If too much time has passed between this visit and the procedure, we may ask that you schedule a brief examination on the morning of admission. We recommend that all anesthesia patients have pre-anesthetic blood testing performed, and require it of patients seven years of age and up.

In order to minimize the risk of vomiting and aspiration while under anesthesia, it is important that you **limit access to food** after 9.00 PM and water after bedtime on the evening before your procedure. Remember that this includes biscuits and treats!

Please have your pet arrive at the hospital between 8.30 and 9.30 AM, unless arrangements for a different drop-off time have been made beforehand. Most **ultrasound examinations (echocardiograms and sonograms) are performed between 7.00 and 8.00 AM.**

You will receive an itemized estimate of charges and a release form to sign at the time of admission. Please review this carefully; a doctor will be happy to discuss any aspect of planned care with you before you leave your pet in our care.

Please call in the afternoon (2.00 to 2.30 PM) to check on the status of surgical patients. We will schedule a discharge time based on your pet's recovery and mobility. Some procedures will require overnight hospitalization; this is almost always anticipated prior to surgery.

Patients who are admitted for blood testing will remain as long as it takes to complete the test. ACTH response test patients may be discharged after 2 hours; dexamethasone suppression tests take 8 hours. Diabetics who are admitted for blood glucose monitoring generally are discharged later in the afternoon.

When you get home you should initially limit food and water access until the excitement of being home diminishes. Thereafter you may offer food and water, but use good judgment to decrease the chance of vomiting.

Monitor surgical wounds for signs of swelling, redness or discharge. If such changes occur please call for advice or to make an appointment to evaluate the incision. **Sutures should be removed 10-14 days after surgery**; please call for an appointment. Very few animal patients will seriously bother an incision; however, some will! A minor amount of licking is normal and not generally cause for alarm. Most patients will become acclimated to the surgical wound within 24 hours or so. Although we use Elizabethan collars sparingly, there are situations and patients who require them. If you find it difficult to keep your dog or cat from worrying a surgical site call immediately for advice on fitting and placing a Bite-Not or Elizabethan collar.

Bandages should stay dry. Be sure to protect them from dew, rain and puddles with plastic bags. If a previously comfortable bandage becomes uncomfortable, feels damp or smells musty please make an appointment to change the dressing as soon as possible.

Use medication as prescribed. If we have prescribed antibiotics or pain medication you should use it as directed on the label. If you are uncertain about how to administer the medication or when to give the next dose please consult our staff or doctors.