

# Surgical/Anesthetic Complications

Client Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Pet's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

All surgical procedures carry inherent risks. Among these are complications associated with anesthesia, infection and incision dehiscence (opening of incision). We try to minimize potential problems by completing a thorough physical examination and recommending pre-anesthetic blood work and electrocardiogram. Abnormalities in these tests, if elected, may necessitate postponing surgery or altering our anesthetic plan.

Most animals without underlying organ problems do well under anesthesia, but even healthy animals can have problems that we cannot anticipate. Animals with significant metabolic or traumatic problems carry greater risks. These problems can be as serious as death or as minor as prolonged recovery. Other problems include cough (from irritation from the tube in the throat or lung irritation) and intestinal problems (not eating very well or diarrhea). We closely monitor animals under anesthesia so that we can support them if there is a problem during the procedure. We routinely monitor respiratory rate, heart rate and rhythm (ECG), oxygen saturation, carbon dioxide levels, and blood pressure.

Anytime an incision is made, infection is a potential complication. Depending on the case, some animals will go home on oral antibiotics. It is important to observe the incision daily to make sure signs of an infection are not developing. Signs like swelling and drainage suggest infection. Infection and dehiscence can be minimized by preventing your pet from licking, chewing, or rubbing the incision. If your pet is bothering the incision, please request a protective collar to use on your pet if one is not provided after surgery. Keeping the incision clean and dry is mandatory to prevent infection; therefore, no bathing or swimming for two weeks after surgery.

Abnormal bleeding is another potential complication of surgery, depending on the surgical procedure. Please call our office if your pet appears weak, gums appear pale, the incision is swollen or bloody fluid is dripping from the incision.

Orthopedic operations that involve implants carry additional potential problems. Infections can have disastrous effects on orthopedic surgeries. Excessive stress or activity can lead to premature failure of the fixation. It is important to minimize activity during the healing period to minimize stress on the implants and to allow healing before implant failure. Individual implants can fail or the entire construct can fail. If the bone (or tendon or ligament) does not heal as it should in a timely fashion, the implant supporting the tissue WILL eventually fail. And again, minimizing activity allows tissues to heal as rapidly as possible.

Pets while hospitalized are regularly monitored during office hours. Critical patients are rechecked in the evening, but 24 hour care is not available at our hospital. If 24 hour care is requested or recommended, we are able to transfer your pet to the closest 24 hour facility (Madison or Appleton).

Every procedure has potential complications and risks above and beyond those mentioned above that are specific to the procedure.

I have read and understand the above information and accept the risks associated with this procedure:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Consent for Code:** It is very important for our staff to know how to immediately respond to an unexpected life-threatening situation since reaction time can be critical to determining treatment outcome. In order to provide your pet with the best possible care while hospitalized or under anesthesia, and at the same time follow your wishes, we ask that you choose a resuscitation code for your pet.

- I do not wish to have any heroic efforts or resuscitation performed to attempt to save my pet's life
- I wish to have basic efforts of resuscitation performed to attempt to save my pet's life. Initial costs may be \$150-\$300
- I wish to have any/all efforts and resuscitation taken to attempt to save my pet's life, and recognize/accept that costs may be \$150-\$500. This approach includes all the above basic resuscitation efforts, in addition to potential surgical efforts.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_