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*Independent, Kind and Honest Veterinary Care in the Heart of Ryedale*

## PLEASE READ BEFORE BRINGING YOUR ANIMAL FOR AN OPERATION

Your pet has been booked in for an operation, which requires a general anaesthetic. A general anaesthetic involves the administration of drugs in various combinations to render the animal unconscious; this allows surgery to take place or positioning for x-rays/detailed examinations. All animals are given a physical examination before anaesthesia. The vet will discuss any specific risks to your animal with you before the animal is booked in. Nowadays there are minimal risks associated with general anaesthesia as more modern, safer drugs are available as well as better monitoring equipment.

### Pre-op blood samples

A blood sample is not required for all animals before an anaesthetic. The vet will discuss with you whether your animal requires one. The cost is £34.80 on top of the cost of the procedure. We recommend animals over 8 years old have a pre-op blood sample. The blood sample measures substances in the blood, which give an indication of the health of the liver and kidney as well as protein levels. Any problems will not necessarily prevent anaesthesia but may require alteration to the anaesthetic or fluid therapy during the procedure. If you would prefer your animal to have a pre-op blood sample and this has not been discussed, please mention it to the nurse when she admits your animal.

### Starvation

It is extremely important to starve your animal for at least 12 hours before an anaesthetic. This time may be longer for certain procedures and shorter in very young animals. Starvation prevents reflux of stomach contents into the oesophagus. This can cause oesophageal problems, as well as aspiration into the lungs leading to pneumonia. A full stomach also puts pressure on the lungs, which reduces oxygen uptake during anaesthesia. Animals should still have access to drinking water until they come into the surgery.

The day of the procedure

- It is helpful if you can take your animal to go to the toilet before it is brought in.
- We ask for animals to arrive as soon after 9am as possible. This enables them to be assessed, weighed and given their pre-medication. The pre-med is an important part of the anaesthetic and increases the safety of



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the procedure. It does however require plenty of time to work. Animals usually receive two painkillers - the administration of these before surgery greatly enhances their effect.

The nurse will admit your animal and ask you to sign a consent form

- If anything is worrying you about your animal or the procedure then do not hesitate to ask. If your animal has been unwell on the morning of the procedure or has had access to food please mention this to the nurse.
- We will require a contact phone number in case of unforeseen circumstances.
- During anaesthesia the nurse continuously monitors the animal while the vet carries out the procedure. We also use a pulse oximeter and capnograph for detailed information on the respiration and oxygen saturation of the blood.
- The nurse will arrange a time for you to ring the surgery (usually around 2-3pm) when you will be informed of the time your animal can be discharged.

Things to expect

- Most anaesthetic agents are given into the vein in the front leg - there will be some hair clipped off the animal's leg/s.
- Hair is always clipped off around the surgical site for purposes of sterility.
- A blue skin disinfectant is used which leaves some coloration to the skin and surrounding hair.
- A tube is usually placed into the windpipe for administration of oxygen and anaesthetic gas; this may result in a transient cough afterwards.

Full instructions will be given to you when your animal is discharged. Occasionally animals are kept in overnight obviously depending on the procedure and the pain relief requirements. We believe that animals recover better at home with their owners so pets are discharged as soon as we are happy that they will be all right.

If you have any queries do not hesitate to ask.