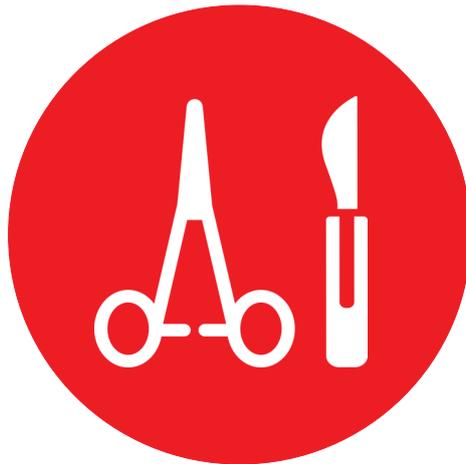




## Preparing Your Pet for Surgery



PETVET clinics are well-equipped, full-service, small animal veterinary practices providing comprehensive diagnostic, medical, surgical and dental care. We aim to offer quality service, giving your pet the maximum opportunity to lead a long and happy life.

ALL THE CARE YOUR PET NEEDS!



Admitting your pet for surgery can be quite stressful for many clients. There are a number of things you should do to ensure that their operation proceeds as smoothly as possible.

### Preparing for Anaesthesia

All anaesthetics involve some risk. For most surgical patients this risk is very small but inadequate preparation can increase these risks.

Some patients are very sensitive to anaesthetic drugs. The most common reaction is to vomit, either while they are going under or when they are waking up. Because anaesthetic drugs reduce the gag and swallow reflexes they may inhale vomited material. Vomited material inhaled into the lungs can lead to severe pneumonia. It is important that all food is withheld from 9.00pm the night before surgery to allow the stomach to empty. Remember that patients who go outside at night might scavenge if they are hungry. This applies particularly to cats so it is best to confine cats overnight.

As anaesthetics can have some adverse effects on organ function, particularly the kidneys, it is important that your pet does not become dehydrated. Fresh drinking water should be available to your pet during the night before surgery. For most procedures your pet will receive an intravenous drip or other fluid support.

### Pre anaesthetic Blood Tests

Some patients may have underlying problems that can be made worse by anaesthesia. Often they are older patients, but some breeds are prone to congenital problems, such as kidney disease or bleeding disorders even when they are young. Blood tests before surgery can screen for potential problems and allow us to modify the procedure accordingly.

### Preparing for Surgery

The skin is a major defense system, keeping bacterial infections from developing inside the body. As most surgical procedures involve opening the skin we provide an easy pathway for bacteria to invade. It is a good idea to give your dog a bath a day or two before their operation to reduce dirt in the coat. This is not a good idea for cats but a good brush will help.

Another good source of bacteria is the bowel. Commonly the bowel and bladder will relax during surgery releasing their contents. This can significantly increase the risk of surgical infection. It is a good idea to encourage your pet to toilet before admission. You can take your dog for a short walk on a lead. For cats used to toileting outside, it is a good idea to provide a litter tray overnight.

If you notice vomiting or diarrhea before surgery it is important to inform the admission staff as it may be advisable to postpone the procedure until this has resolved.

Urine leakage during surgery can contaminate the surgical field and result in a reduction of internal body temperature, both by wetting the skin and as a result of sponge bathing to clean them up. Also your pet can become quite smelly as it is often difficult to give them a good bath until sutures or dressings are removed.

### Giving your Pet Medication before Surgery

There are no hard and fast rules. Some drugs should be continued 'as normal' while others should be discontinued before surgery. Medication to treat conditions such as epilepsy, heart disease or hyperthyroidism should be continued as normal but if your pet is on Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) they should be suspended a day or two before the operation. Diabetic pets can present significant challenges as often they will need a morning insulin injection but cannot be fed a normal meal. They may require a glucose drip before, during and after surgery to manage their blood sugar until they commence eating again.

If your pet is on medication and requires surgery it is important to review this thoroughly with your PETVET veterinarian.



## On the Day of the Operation

If your pet is in hospital we will take care of their pre-anaesthetic preparation and medication for you.

Surgical admission is between 7.30am and 8.30am. We will double check the procedure, your pets preparation and check if there is anything else to be done while under anaesthetic. If early morning admission is difficult for you, your pet can also be admitted the night before. Please check our closing times for this. If you would like a pre anaesthetic blood screen now is a good time to request it.

Shortly after admission we will administer a pre operative sedative and painkiller. If your pet is either very nervous or aggressive with strangers it is very helpful to let us know so that we can give this to your pet in your presence. Once the sedative has calmed your pet they will usually accept handling by our hospital staff.

Your pets' blankets, bed or toys should be left at home. They can become a focus for anxiety and end up soiled, lost in the wash, or may be mutilated. Occasionally they may be eaten, causing an obstruction in the bowel, and creating a need for more surgery. Your pet will be provided with comfortable bedding and will appreciate their own when they return home. We will also provide a collar and lead for your dog while it is in hospital. They may be removed and replaced a number of times during their stay in hospital and as a result, your own lead can easily become misplaced.

## Discharge after Surgery

Most surgery patients will be discharged after 3.00pm. If they have had surgery that morning this gives them sufficient time to recover from the anaesthetic. For major surgeries most patients will be managed in hospital for a day or two afterwards to ensure a smooth recovery. Clients should telephone around 10.30am each day their pet is hospitalised for an update. Visitors are welcome for long-term patients after 4.30pm.

## Check List Before Surgery

- Fasted
- Access to water overnight
- Skin clean
- Medication sorted
- Admission 7.30am-8.30am
- No Bedding or Toys please
- We will provide a collar and lead for dogs
- Cats confined to a secure carry cage

### CLINIC LOCATIONS

**PETVET Lower Hutt**  
70 Pharazyn Street, Melling  
Lower Hutt 5010

**PETVET Silverstream**  
9 Kiln Street, Silverstream  
Upper Hutt 5019  
+64 4 5277552