



**FOUR TOWN VETERINARY**  
HOSPITAL

## Preparing for Your Pet's Surgery

### Today:

Pre-surgical blood work is run to make sure your pet is healthy enough for anesthesia. We send a sample of your pet's blood out to the lab to check organ function, complete blood count, and clotting factor (dogs are also checked for heartworm and tick-borne illnesses). This is important because even a young, seemingly healthy animal can sometimes have blood work results that indicate that treatment is needed for an illness or disorder prior to surgery or that medications need to be adjusted. We will call you within two business days with the results.

### Medications:

Once we receive bloodwork results, we will send home medications to help with nausea, pain, and anxiety before, during, and after the procedure. Exact medications vary depending on your pet's needs, but may include the following:

- **Maropitant/Cerenia** is an anti-nausea medication given the night before the procedure.
- **Carprofen/Onsior/Meloxicam** are examples of potential pain medications. They are typically started the night before the procedure and continue after the procedure. **They must be given with food.**
- **Gabapentin** helps with pain and anxiety. It is typically given the night before the procedure and repeated two hours before drop-off. This medication causes sedation.
- **Trazodone** helps with anxiety. It is typically given the night before the procedure and repeated two hours before drop-off. This medication causes sedation.



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**The night before:**

It is very important that you fast your pet the night before surgery. This means **no food, water, or treats after 10 PM** on the night before their procedure. Please remember to pick up water bowls, close the toilet seat, and leash-walk dogs to potty so you can make sure they don't eat "snacks" in the backyard. If you have multiple pets, please remember to pick up their food and water, as well, or else separate them so the pet undergoing surgery has no access to them. **If your pet eats or drinks during the fasting window, their surgery will need to be postponed for their safety.** Animals that eat or drink too soon before anesthesia are at a risk of severe complications and even death.

**The morning of:**

**We will give you a set drop-off time** when we call to confirm the appointment, usually one business day prior to surgery (the drop-off will typically be between 7:30-8:30AM). Please be as prompt as possible. Surgery days can be a bit chaotic, and check-in goes much smoother when our patients arrive at the arranged times. If you have restrictions and need to be the first drop-off, please let us know as soon as possible so we can try our best to make appropriate arrangements.

When you arrive at your designated time, **please plan on spending about 10-15 minutes** filling out the surgical consent form. Please let us know if your pet has any special requirements, so we can make sure they are safe and comfortable in their kennel before and after surgery.

**Pick-up time:**

Once your pet's procedure is finished and they are in recovery, **we will call you with an update and to give you a discharge time** (typically between 1:30-5PM). Please be as prompt as possible to allow for a stress-free discharge process. Expect to spend between **10-15 minutes** with us while we review the procedure, explain discharge instructions, and answer any questions you might have. If you have any restrictions on what time you can



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pick up your pet, please let us know during morning drop-off so we can do our best to accommodate you.

**Post-op recovery:**

Post-op instructions vary depending on the nature of your pet's surgery. You can likely expect your pet to go home with an **Elizabethan collar** (or "**cone collar**") that they will need to wear at all times for the next **7-14 days**. You will also likely have to put your dog on strict rest for a prescribed number of days. If your pet is not crate trained, it is a good idea to get them acclimated to a crate or cage prior to surgery to reduce post-op stress. If you believe that your pet would benefit from sedative medications to facilitate this rest, please let us know ahead of time.

Some pets have visible stitches that will need to be removed by the doctor or a technician at a post-op revisit appointment. Others will have sutures under the skin that will dissolve as the incision site heals. Either way, it is very important that you follow the doctor's instructions to ensure that your pet has the smoothest recovery possible after their surgery.