

General Anaesthesia and Pre Anaesthetic Blood tests

Why do we need anaesthetise your pet?

No one likes the thought of their beloved pet having to undergo an anaesthetic, however at times, just like in us people, it may be necessary for a number of reasons.

Some of the more common reasons we give animals anaesthetics include:

- Desexing (both male and female animals)
- Dentistry – scaling, polishing and removing teeth if needed
- Lump removals
- Abdominal surgery
- Radiographs (x-rays)

What happens when my pet receives an anaesthetic?

After admission, your pet will receive sedation and pain relief prior to administration of the anaesthetic. This is to reduce anxiety and to ensure your pet has a smooth anaesthetic recovery. After about 30 minutes, your pet will receive an intravenous injection of an anaesthetic. This enables your pet to fall asleep quickly (we don't make them count backwards from 10!) and allows the vet to pass a tube down your pet's windpipe to ensure your pet can breathe properly during the procedure. This also allows oxygen and an anaesthetic vapour (the same as human doctors use in people!) to maintain the anaesthetic for as long as is necessary.

How can we minimise the risks of anaesthesia?

At Concord Veterinary Hospital, we take every single anaesthetic very seriously. Our fantastic vets Fiona, Rebecca, Karen, Ran and David and of course our amazing nurses, Bronwyn, Chloe, Leah, Rheanna, Arianna and May, do everything in their power to ensure your animal has a smooth and safe anaesthetic and recovery.

We specifically minimise the risks of anaesthesia by:

- calculating the exact dose of sedation and anaesthetic required by your pet to have a smooth anaesthetic induction and recovery
- having a dedicated surgical and anaesthetic nurse for each patient to monitor them closely from the minute they walk through the front door to the moment they go home
- having a dedicated operating room
- having a dedicated recovery room which is quiet and warm in which your pet can recover in
- using the latest monitoring equipment whilst your pet is under anaesthesia
- recommending pre anaesthetic blood work (please see below)
- recommending intravenous fluids (please see below)

How is My Pet Monitored under Anaesthesia?

The first and most important piece of monitoring equipment is veterinary nurse! Machines are great and we love them – but nothing can replace a veterinary nurse with years of experience of monitoring animals under anaesthesia. When your pet is under an anaesthetic the veterinary nurse does not leave their side until they are safely awake again.

Together with the veterinarian, our nurses monitor vital physical signs such as:

- Heart rate
- Respiratory rate
- Anaesthetic depth

Our anaesthetic equipment monitors:

- Oxygen levels in your pet's blood
- Blood pressure
- Heart rate

With the watchful eye of our nurses and advanced monitoring equipment, your pet is closely monitored through their anaesthetic at Concord Veterinary Hospital.

How can Anaesthetics Affect My Pet's overall health?

Anaesthetics can affect the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys. Before each anaesthetic the vet will listen to your pet's heart and lungs to ensure these are healthy, however checking the liver and kidneys can be a bit trickier. A **blood test** is required to ensure the liver and kidneys are working properly and can handle an anaesthetic. This can be in the form of a pre-anaesthetic blood test on the same day as surgery, or if your pet is a little older and a little more fragile, a more comprehensive blood test (just like we would get at the doctors) may be performed a few days prior to their anaesthetic.

What Animals should have a blood test prior to an anaesthetic?

In short – all animals should have a blood test prior to an anaesthetic! We would recommend a pre-anaesthetic blood test for all of our patients – even young healthy animals can have underlying health problems. All humans, young and old, who undergo an anaesthetic, have basic blood work performed prior to an anaesthetic. The blood test is especially important in any animal that is over 7 years of age – and we highly recommend (almost insist!) all animals over this age have a blood test prior to a general anaesthesia.

What Can Go Wrong?

At Concord Veterinary Hospital we have only the most modern, up to date and safe anaesthetics money can buy (in fact – we only use the two safest anaesthetics on the market!). However, every anaesthetic is taken very seriously by our vets and vet nurses. Anaesthetic complications can happen in young healthy animals as well as older more unwell patients. Our vet's and nurses will discuss these anaesthetic risks with you on admission of your animal to hospital.