



Anesthesia FAQs



Veterinary Wellness Center is committed to providing convenient care in a low stress environment.

Questions about the safety and monitoring of anesthesia are common. Your pet's safety is our top priority, so we combine state of the art monitoring equipment, comprehensive checklists, individualized medication protocols, and detailed Care Team training to ensure your pet has the safest procedure possible.

Why is anesthesia necessary?

To control pain, prevent anxiety and fear, and safely restrict movement.

How does anesthesia work?

Injectable sedatives and gas (inhaled) anesthesia place the brain and body in a state of relaxed unconsciousness.

Is anesthesia safe?

Yes. Healthy pets have less than 0.1% risk of death with anesthesia. Pets with a stable systemic illness also have low risks that can be managed effectively. The health benefits and quality of life pets gain from undergoing dental or surgical procedures far outweigh the low risk of anesthesia.

What are the most common side effects of anesthesia?

- Low blood pressure- managed with IV catheter, fluid therapy, and injectable medications as needed.
- Low body temperature- managed with heat support (heated table, forced warm air blanket, fluid warmer) and preventing heat loss (blankets, socks).
- Nausea, vomiting- minimized by giving anti-nausea medication before anesthesia and by feeding small meals the day of surgery.
- Delayed bowel movements- can be normal for 36 hours after surgery.





What happens when my pet is admitted for anesthesia or surgery?

Before the procedure-

- Weight & vitals verified, customized medication calculations completed
- Lab and X-ray tests completed and reviewed by the doctor
 - In some cases, results may find cause to reschedule the procedure
- Medications given for pain, nausea, and mild sedation
- Front leg shaved, IV catheter placed
- Monitoring and anesthetic equipment double checked

During the procedure-

- Anesthesia injected through IV catheter for breathing tube placement
- Anesthesia monitors connected: heart rate, oxygen percentage, carbon dioxide levels, breathing rate, blood pressure, temperature
- Fluid therapy and heat support started
- Trained Care Team member with pet at all times for monitoring & breathing support
- Additional oxygen support for pets at risk of low blood oxygen

After the procedure-

- Continued monitoring of heart rate, breathing, body temperature, and pain control
- IV catheter removed and pick up time finalized once fully awake & stable



What can I do to help decrease my pet's risks during anesthesia?

- Keep a complete medical history, including previous anesthetic procedures or allergies.
- Complete recommended testing such as blood, urine, or X-ray tests.
- Stay updated on parasite testing & prevention. Heartworms, tick-borne disease, and intestinal parasites can increase anesthesia risks by causing anemia, decreased ability to clot, or damage to the heart and lungs.
- Schedule procedures as early as possible. Spay & neuter young pets before they develop infections or cancer. Start dental treatments earlier in life so the anesthesia is shorter with less pain. Remove masses while they are small to decrease surgery time, improve healing speed, and increase the number of treatment options available if cancer is identified.