



Ovariohysterectomy and Castration

Ovariohysterectomy and castrations (also known as spays and neuters) help to decrease pet overpopulation and reduce or eliminate the risk for many health problems in our pets, including certain infections and certain types of cancer. Spays and neuters are common procedures, but are still major surgical procedures that may have associated risks and complications. All spays and neuters are not created equal; there are different methods and protocols used in various veterinary facilities around the country. Because you care for your pet as part of your family, it is up to you to make the best choice when it comes to these procedures. When deciding where to have the surgical procedure performed, make sure to consider the following:

Physical Exam: Should be performed prior to any anesthetic or surgical procedure to alert the surgeon to physical abnormalities that could cause surgical or anesthetic complications.

Pre-Anesthetic Blood work: Should also be performed prior to any anesthetic or surgical procedure to document internal diseases such as infection, organ dysfunction, and other diseases that could cause anesthetic or surgical complications.

Tailored Anesthetic Protocols: Each patient is an individual and thus each may react differently to certain anesthetic and pre-anesthetic drugs. The doctor should base the anesthetic protocol on the findings of the physical exam and blood work.

Pre-anesthetic Medications: Are given to provide cardiovascular support, decrease the transmission of pain, and decrease the amount of anesthetic needed.

Anesthetic Agents: Sevoflurane and Isoflurane are the safest anesthetic gases commonly used in veterinary and human medicine. They have lower impact on organ systems and quicker recovery times than previously used gases.

Anesthetic Monitoring: Equipment such as an ECG, Pulse Oximeter, and Blood Pressure Machine should be used to monitor the patient's status under anesthesia and alert the surgical staff to any anesthetic complications. Because equipment can fail, an anesthetic technician should be monitoring the patient and equipment at all times during the procedure.

Sterile Surgical Technique: Should be used to prevent post-surgical infection, which can result in death. Sterilized equipment should be used for each patient and should be cleaned and resterilized between uses. Equipment from a "cold tray" is not considered sterile.

Pain Management: Our patients cannot tell us if they are in pain. After a surgical procedure, however, we may safely assume that there is significant discomfort. Pre- and post-operative pain management is essential for the welfare of our patients and should not be neglected.

Post-Surgical Monitoring: Any surgical procedure can have complications, and for complex surgical procedures patients need to be monitored for pain, bleeding, incisional complications, etc. When a patient is kept in the hospital overnight, medical personnel should be monitoring them closely throughout the night.

continued

Ovariohysterectomy and Castration Checklist:

Concern	Clinic #1 - <i>Pilchuck Vet Hospital</i>	Clinic #2 -	Clinic #3 -
1) Is a complete physical exam performed prior to anesthesia?	<i>Yes</i>		
2) Is blood work performed prior to anesthesia?	<i>Yes</i>		
3) Are anesthesia protocols tailored to individual patient's needs?	<i>Yes</i>		
4) Are pre-anesthetic medications given?	<i>Yes</i>		
5) Is Sevoflurane or Isoflurane used as an anesthetic?	<i>Yes - Sevoflurane</i>		
6) Is the patient monitored with equipment while under anesthesia?	<i>Yes</i>		
7) Is a technician present at all times to monitor the patient under anesthesia?	<i>Yes</i>		
8) Is the surgery performed with sterile technique & equipment resterilized between patients?	<i>Yes</i>		
9) Is the patient given pain-killers for surgical recovery?	<i>Yes</i>		
10) Is the patient monitored overnight for complications?	<i>Yes</i>		
11) Is the patient sent home on painkillers?	<i>Variable, depending on patient.</i>		
12) What is the cost of the procedure and what does that cost include?	<i>Call for information: depends on size & species 360 568-3113, ext. 2</i>		
13) What other costs are or may be incurred at the time of surgery?	<i>Exam (if not already done within last month), vaccines, possibly other procedures.</i>		
14) Will I be updated on my pet's condition on a regular basis?	<i>Yes</i>		
15) Will a doctor be available for post-surgical questions or complications?	<i>Yes, 24-hour staffing available on-site.</i>		