



What to Expect from your Pet's Veterinary Boarded Surgeon

How is a surgeon different from my regular veterinarian?

A board certified veterinary surgeon is a licensed veterinarian who has obtained additional intensive training in a three year surgical residency, passed rigorous testing, and yearly continuing educational requirements. A general practitioner veterinarian may feel your pet needs the additional expertise of a veterinary surgeon in areas like orthopedics, reconstructive surgeries, tumor removals, or minimally invasive surgeries via arthroscopy. These types of surgeries require specialized equipment and specifically trained nursing staff.

Will my regular veterinarian still be involved?

Typically, your pet's veterinarian will oversee many aspects of your pet's pre-op and post-op care, just as in human medicine. Recovery periods in surgical cases vary and we will work with you and your regular veterinarian throughout the processes. Detailed summaries from each visit will be sent with you and faxed to your doctor detailing recommendations on at home recovery, pain management, rehabilitation, and follow up medical care.

Common Referral Surgeries:

- Cruciate ligament repair
 - Tibial plateau leveling osteotomy (TPLO)
 - Extracapsular stabilization (lateral suture & Tight Rope)
- Luxating patella surgery (MPL)
- Surgical repair of hip dysplasia including-total hip replacement (THR)
- Surgical repair of elbow dysplasia-partial elbow replacement (CUE System)
- Arthroscopy of the shoulders, elbows, hocks, and knees
- Fracture/luxation repair
- Achilles tendon repair
- Airway repair (nares, soft palate reduction, laryngeal paralysis correction)
- Wound/reconstructive surgery
- Tumor/mass removal
- Total ear canal ablation (TECA)

How do I set up a consult?

Our surgeons see patients Monday through Saturday. Please plan to spend at least one hour at the hospital for an initial consultation. Please bring your pet and all relevant medical information and imaging from your regular veterinarian including: Film radiographs, copy of digital radiographs (DICOM images), a list of current prescriptions &/or supplements that your pet is taking, a medical history that includes any medical conditions, past surgeries, &/or allergies and a list of questions to ask the doctor. We will call your referring veterinarian for their medical records when you make the appointment.

It may be necessary to complete additional radiographs, ultrasound, &/or laboratory testing depending on your pet's condition. These additional diagnostic tests may require you to spend additional time at the hospital or leave your pet with us for a limited duration to complete these tests. Some radiographs are best taken if your pet is sedated. We may ask you not to feed your pet the morning of their appointment so that we are able to give your pet pain medications and/or sedation.

The consult:

The doctor will review your veterinarian's medical records. They will examine the patient and collect an extensive history on your pet. They will probably ask you questions regarding your pet's environment, lifestyle, and preferences, as they all effect treatment options and outcomes.

Orthopedic procedures are very different for a couch potato versus a dog who hikes daily or has to climb two flights of stairs in their condo. After evaluating your pet and their lifestyle, the doctor will recommend the best treatment option(s) available and assist you in your decision making. Every patient is different! It is our job to help you figure out what is best for your pet and family to ensure that the outcome meets your expectation. You will be provided with a cost estimate of each option. A detailed summary of this visit will be faxed to your regular veterinarian.

Questions you might ask your Surgeon during your pet's consult:

- What should I expect for the outcome of the surgery/procedure?
- Does the surgery require any special equipment?
- Does the surgery have to be done by a board-certified surgeon?
- What will happen if I don't do the procedure?
- How often have you performed this type of surgery on a patient similar to mine?
- What are the risks in doing the procedure?
- How long is the recovery process?
- What follow up care is necessary?
- What should I have set up at home for my pet's recovery?
- Will I need additional assistance the day after surgery?
- Should I take the day off of work? The day after off work?
- Are there things that could happen at home that could "ruin the surgery"?

Any other question(s) you might have!!!!

Day of your pet's surgery:

We do surgery Monday through Friday by appointment. It is necessary to fast your pet the night before his/her surgical procedure. As a general rule, we recommend no food after 10pm the night before, but please do NOT withhold water. Please bring all medications/supplements that your pet is currently taking. You are welcome to bring an item from home (toy, pillow, blanket, etc).

Your pet will be admitted to the hospital between 7:30am and 8:00am by a member of the surgical nursing staff. Every patient is reevaluated by the surgeon the day of surgery. Each patient receives a pre-medication that helps them relax and makes the surgery prep time less stressful. An intravenous catheter is set for administering anesthesia, pain medication, and fluid therapy throughout your pet's stay. Your pet will be under general anesthesia (gas inhalant) for the surgery and may receive local anesthetic (i.e. epidural) depending on the procedure. We will monitor respiration & oxygenation, cardiac function, blood pressure, and body temperature throughout the entire procedure.

One of the surgery team's licensed technicians will call you during your pet's recovery with an update and set up a discharge appointment. Plan to spend 30-45 minutes at your pet's discharge to go over medications, recovery, restrictions/recommendations, and your pet's follow-up plan. You will receive all of this information in writing at the time of your discharge. A copy of this will be faxed to your regular veterinarian.

Most patients will require overnight hospitalization after their surgical procedure. We have a highly trained nursing staff around the clock to ensure that your pet's recovery and pain levels are continuously monitored and immediate treatment can be provided. We are happy to offer visiting hours for all our patients. Please coordinate your visit with the nursing staff. If your pet requires more observation/medical intervention than can be provided by a licensed technician, they will be transferred to a 24-hour facility for continued care by a veterinarian.

Recovery:

Recovery is one of the most important components of the surgical process. We will advise you on all of your options to ensure that your pet's recovery maximizes all the efforts that went into surgery. We will also help you anticipate your go-home needs, such as non-skid surfaces, confinement options, icing materials, heating materials, slings for walking, etc. We may also suggest adjunctive therapies like physical rehabilitation (including exercise, massage, hydrotherapy) and/or acupuncture.

Team effort:

This process requires that you the owner, the referring veterinarian, and our veterinary surgeon work as a team throughout this entire process. Communication with all the parties throughout your pet's treatment is ESSENTIAL! We will work hard to ensure that the care we provide is a seamless extension of the services provided by your general practice veterinarian.

Veterinary Pet Insurance:

Our team is happy to help you complete all necessary paperwork required by your insurance carrier. If pre-approval is required, please let us know at your consultation. We will work with you and your provider to ensure timely reimbursements.