

The doctors and staff at Veterinary Surgical Centers of the Delta wish to welcome you and your dog. We are honored that you have chosen our facility for the orthopedic needs of your pet, and hope that we are able to be the first step in the healing process!

We know the day of surgery is a big day for your family. As dog owners and pet lovers ourselves, we can appreciate the concern, anxiety and anticipation that 'surgery day' can bring. We would like for you to know that we are here for you from the beginning and until your dog returns to a pain-free, active lifestyle.

1 How do I prepare my dog for the surgery appointment (and, what do I need to bring)?

Do not feed breakfast to your dog (water is o.k.) on the morning of your initial consultation and please bring any medication that your dog is taking, or has been recently prescribed as well as any pertinent radiographs (x-rays) or x-ray discs, MRI's, CT Scans from your regular family veterinarian. We will contact your family veterinarian for copies of medical records and bloodwork. It is ideal if your dog has had normal bloodwork (CBC and serum chemistry panel) within 6 weeks of major surgery. If necessary, we can perform bloodwork on the day of surgery at our hospital.

2 How do I prepare the night before my dog's surgery?

Feed your dog as usual the night before surgery. Please do not feed any food after 10pm (water is o.k. up until the time of surgery). If your dog is on any special medications (from your family veterinarian) or a special nutritional diet, please alert our doctors to the names and dosages. Most medications do not need to be given the morning of surgery



(there are important exceptions, so please let our doctors know if your dog is on any medications). Aspirin should be discontinued at least one week prior to surgery.

3 What time should I bring my dog in for surgery?

Some patients may have a consultation in the morning and surgery in the afternoon of that same day. Other patients may have had a previous consultation and are being dropped off for surgery on that day. It is important that patients arrive before 9:00 am, so that we can prepare them for anesthesia and surgery.

During the morning hours from 7:30am-9:00am we are planning the day out (doctor's rounds) and we are performing all of our pre-operative physical examinations. After doctor rounds, bloodwork is performed and reviewed, intravenous catheters are placed, pre-medications (narcotics) are calculated and administered, epidural anesthesia is administered, and x-rays may be taken all before surgery even begins! Even if a patient is going into surgery at 3:00pm, we require their presence in the morning hours.

4 How is the exact time of my dog's surgery determined?

We use a number of criteria when creating our surgery schedule for any given day. Such issues as the critical nature of a problem or the level of nursing care needed post-operatively help determine the time of week and time of day we feel most comfortable performing surgery. This effort allows our staff to optimize the best chance for an excellent post-operative recovery. In general, we make every attempt to offer the best surgical care available while balancing individual client needs and requests.

5 What can I expect the day of surgery?

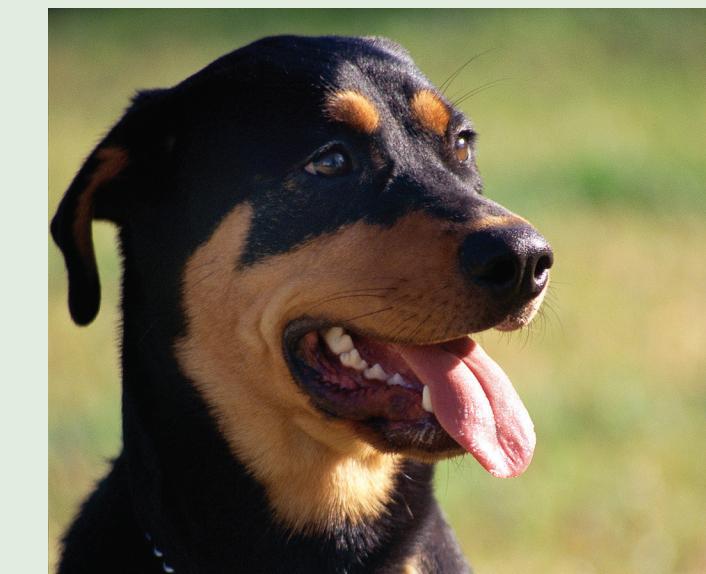
On the day of surgery, depending on the time of day for drop-off you may meet with an admission nurse, or the surgeon depending on availability. It is important on the day of surgery to leave several contact phone numbers (cell number, pager, direct desk line, spouse/partner, etc.). We always like to speak with pet owners immediately following surgery to provide a progress report and answer any questions related to the surgery itself. In the event your dog is staying overnight with us, our hospitals are staffed by veterinarians 24-hours a day. You may call at any time during the night to receive a 'nursing' update. In most cases, our surgeons will request you call between 9:00-10:30am the day following surgery to discuss the overnight care of your dog and to discuss a possible discharge time.

6 When will my pet's post-surgery care be reviewed?

A discharge nurse will review a full set of detailed, written discharge instructions with you prior to leaving our hospital. This review and discharge can take up to 30 minutes and a specific discharge time will be determined the morning after surgery.

7 How do I prepare for the ride home?

Making a comfortable space for your pet's journey home is important. Bring along some blankets for padding or warmth. A crate in the back of an SUV or the floor in the back of an SUV is an ideal choice for transporting your pet. If you do not have an SUV, the back seat of a sedan will



work just as well as long as your pet can be discouraged from trying to join you in the front seat! A companion riding in the back seat with your dog will generally suffice to avoid this scenario. It can be common that dogs experience incontinence on the way home from the hospital, and wee-wee pads or non-essential bedding linens are recommended. A hand towel or two can come in handy as well!

8 What should I expect when I get home with my dog?

Your pet will likely be very excited to see you, and arrive back home. This initial burst of excitement should be tapered to minimize excessive activity. This is also a time to very gradually reintroduce your surgical patient to the rest of your family. In particular other pets and small children should have supervised visits with your surgical patient for the first couple of weeks post-operatively. Typically, the day after surgery, your dog will find their own comfort zone once home, and find their favorite place to sleep off any remaining narcotics and anesthetic drugs. Do not hesitate to call one of our 24-hour care facilities if for any reason you or your family has concerns regarding these initial hours/days at home.

9 How long will I need to stay at home with my pet?

This usually depends on your comfort level. It is our policy to only discharge a patient from the hospital once they may be left alone (in a confined area) for 6-8 hours at a time. Most dogs will be eating and getting around very well within a day or two of being back in their home environment. Dogs are remarkably resilient and may surprise you just how agile they are soon after surgery.



10 What will I need to plan for during my follow-up appointments?

This is the same as your initial consultation. Please do not feed your dog breakfast the morning of the appointment. Most pets require x-rays and some light sedation to allow for comfortable and accurate positioning during the x-ray procedure. This procedure may take as long as 30-45 minutes. Suture or staples will be removed between 10-14 days post-operatively. This procedure usually takes about 10 minutes.

11 Can my pet be left alone with other animals?

The short answer is: No. It is best to separate your healing pet from other pets when you are not there to chaperone their communal activities. Leaving them together may allow them to romp, play or disagree (fight!) with one another. Also, we would like to avoid those fastidious dogs who will lick the incision of their compatriots in an attempt to aid the healing process.

12 Will my pet have trouble walking on slick floors or uneven surfaces at home?

Initially, your dog may have trouble rising from a sleeping position if the floor is slippery. Restricting your pet's run of the whole house and using rug runners on slippery floors may help. We also advise using an underbelly sling (the shoulder strap from a gym bag or a rolled up beach towel works well) to assist your dog into a standing position for the first 2-3 weeks after orthopedic surgery.

13 How do I keep my pet quiet if they wish to be active?

It is fairly critical to the success of nearly every surgery to enforce some period of restricted post-operative activity. This time period of restricted activity will be discussed at your

discharge appointment. We advise a small bathroom, kitchen area, kennel/crate or laundry room as ideal places to house your dog during the period of enforced rest. Some folks have successfully used baby gates to cordon off a limited, comfortable place for their pets to recover. Additionally, we will provide a supply of sedatives (acepromazine) for those dogs that have trouble with 'cabin fever' during their post-operative rehabilitation.

14 Can my pet go up and down stairs following surgery?

The party line: No. However, if a chaperone is available to steady the pet along the way, a dog may slowly walk up and down the stairs with this assistance. We recommend that a baby gate be used to discourage your dog from going up and down the stairs without this assistance.

15 Will I need to keep my pet indoors during the healing phase?

Dogs should only be outside on a leash during the healing period (discussed at your discharge appointment). In most cases, we recommend and encourage a five-minute daily leashed walk after the first week and increasing by five minutes each week thereafter. It is important to keep the surgical site clean, dry and protected. Please ask for an Elizabethan collar if you feel that your pet will be one to lick at the surgical incision.

At VSCD we work closely with you, your regular family veterinarian and with your pet to assist you through every aspect of the post-surgical recovery period. We hope your VSCD-experience is as stress-free, pain-free and hassle-free as these situations can be.

Thank you for allowing us to care for your beloved pet the same way we care for our own.



www.vscdsurgerycenters.com

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Dublin

Walnut Creek

To schedule an appointment,

please call:

925/201-3400

or 510/595-4600



VETERINARY
SURGICAL CENTERS OF THE DELTA



How to Prepare Your Dog
for Orthopedic Surgery

Come. Sit. Stay.
Heal...