

**PLANNING A SURGERY FOR YOUR PET
TAKES A LOT OF PLANNING!**

Please review these preoperative issues that need your attention to optimize the surgical outcome and experience for you and your pet with your primary care veterinary team and *Direct Veterinary Surgery, PC*

- 1) If your pet will be having surgery, it is recommended to NOT bathe your dog for up to 2 weeks following the procedure. If you would like to bathe or groom your pet prior to surgery, please do so (no later than 5 days before). *Bathing your pet when they have a recent skin incision can cause surgical infections.*
- 2) Skin infections can be silently brewing under dense fur, and these infections increase the risk of surgical infections. Several days prior to your pet's surgery date, visually inspect your pet's skin, separating the hairs and rubbing your hands over the body. The belly, groin, armpit, neck (under collars) are all common sites for skin infections. Crusts, pustules, red spots, dark/leathery skin and a musty odor are signs of skin infection. *Seek veterinary care to have a possible skin infection treated prior to surgery. Skin infections found during surgical preparations will be brought to your attention; you will need to make a decision about proceeding with surgery or delaying in order to treat the skin infection first.*
- 3) Does your pet have one of the following conditions?
 - a) Age < 4mo
 - b) Diabetes
 - c) Kidney problems
 - d) Seizures
 - e) Addison's disease
 - f) Oral steroid medications (ex. prednisone, Medrol)
 - g) Severe separation anxiety
 - h) Severe doctor anxiety
 - i) Any other known anesthesia risks from past experiences

If "yes" to any of these conditions, please alert your primary care veterinary team when planning your surgical visit to receive specific instructions.

- 4) If your pet is older than 4 months of age, please remove and withhold food and treats after 10pm the night before surgery. Access to water is fine. Pets are creative, so make sure your other pets' food is picked up, toddlers and babies do not have the ability to feed snacks, and all

members of the household know not to feed in the morning. *Having food in the stomach right before surgery can cause serious anesthesia complications, such as aspiration pneumonia, so this is an important instruction for your pet's health.*

- 5) Prior to your admission appointment on the day of surgery, please encourage and allow enough time for your pet to urinate and defecate. Anesthesia medications often relax the body enough to allow urine and stool to be passed while asleep, soiling fur and skin. *This can become a hygiene problem, and increases risk for surgical infections.*
- 6) If your pet is having a surgery that involves the colon, rectum or anal region, please withhold food after the morning meal the day before surgery (24hr fasting). During the evening before surgery and on the morning of surgery, please encourage and allow enough time for your pet to defecate.
- 7) Most primary care veterinary clinics are not staffed 24-hours for after-hours supervision of your pet. Please factor this into your decision making as postoperative plans are made. *Most patients are best cared for at home after procedures, but please discuss your preferences with the admitting doctor. You may choose to transport your pet to a 24-hour facility for overnight care.*
- 8) When you leave your pet at the clinic the morning of surgery, please make sure we have one or more active phone numbers that will allow us to speak directly to you when we need your guidance through medical decisions. If you are not available and your pet is under anesthesia or experiencing a medical complication, we will need to make efficient decisions **without your input**. *Our preference will always be to speak directly with you, so please make sure phones are turned on and handy throughout the day.*

Please see additional resources in planning your pet's surgical experience at:

www.directvetsurg.com