

## General Anaesthetic Skin Mass Removal – What you need to know

### *The Day Before*

- Please do not feed your pet after 10pm the night before the procedure. They can have water available overnight but just take it up in the morning
- If your pet is on any specific diet, please bring some along with you
- If your pet is on any long term medication please call to ask whether this should be given as normal the night before/morning of the procedure

### *On the day*

- You will have been given an appointment time for a pre-operative examination by the vet, to discuss the procedure and estimated costs.
- The vet will:
  - Weigh your pet
  - Perform a physical examination including confirming where the mass that needs removal is.
  - Go through the estimated cost of the procedure and discuss whether it is appropriate to send the mass away to the laboratory for histopathology to find out exactly what the lump is.
  - Discuss with you whether a pre-anaesthetic blood test is indicated to check basic liver and kidney function etc before going under an anaesthetic.
  - Discuss with you whether intravenous fluids (“a drip”) are indicated based on anaesthetic risk category and estimated length of the procedure.  
*Intravenous fluids are proven to help to improve anaesthetic safety and speed up recovery times.*
  - Read through the consent form with you and will happily discuss any potential complications of the procedure to allow you to give informed consent. These could include:

During the procedure	After the procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bleeding</li><li>○ Anaesthetic reaction/thromboembolism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Pain/swelling/infection of wound</li><li>○ Suture material reaction</li><li>○ Wound breakdown</li><li>○ Regrowth of mass</li></ul>

If you require further explanation of how these could affect your pet please ask your vet.

- After gaining informed consent from you and a contact telephone number that you are available on all day, the vet will admit your pet to the Prep area
  - Here, they will have bloods taken if indicated and an intravenous catheter placed. They will receive a “premedication” injection which contains an opioid pain relief and something to help reduce anxiety levels. They will then be introduced to their kennel where they will stay while their “premed” takes effect.

- Once ready, your pet will then be anaesthetised with a drug through their intravenous catheter, a tube will be placed in their airway and connected to oxygen and anaesthetic gas which keeps them anaesthetised. Once settled, they will be positioned and the mass prepared for surgery by clipping the hair away then “scrubbing” with an appropriate antimicrobial surgical scrub solution.
- Most skin masses are excised by making an elliptical incision around the mass, others are done by cutting over the top of the mass and “shelling out” the mass from underneath.
- If we have confirmed that the mass is cancerous, or if we can’t be sure, we try to make sure we get “clear margins” i.e. we take some normal skin/tissue from around the mass itself to try to make sure we get all the nasty cells to reduce the chances of regrowth. Depending on position/type of mass this is not always achievable and is something that your vet will discuss with you.
- The wound is then sutured up often in two layers and sometimes a dressing or bandage is placed. Depending on size and position of the mass, sometimes a drain is placed for a few days to prevent fluid building up where the mass has been removed from. If this is likely to be necessary, your vet will explain what this means during your admission appointment.
- Your pet is then recovered from the anaesthetic and is monitored throughout recovery. Once up and about they will be offered some lunch and dogs will be taken out to stretch their legs.
- A veterinary nurse will call you to let you know how things have gone and confirm the time for picking your pet up.
- At the discharge appointment a veterinary nurse/vet will go through medications and after care with you and explain about post-operative checks and suture removal.