

# Preparation before admission for Sedation or General Anaesthesia.

## The night before

For most pets it is necessary to have an empty stomach on the day of their anaesthetic. This is because there is a risk of vomiting or regurgitation when under an anaesthetic and is more likely if there is food in the stomach. Vomited food can be inhaled into the lungs, causing serious damage.

**Cats & Dogs** – we advise a 12-hour starvation period, so please don't feed your pet after 8pm. They can have free access to water until you bring them to the surgery. For cats this will mean keeping them indoors overnight, so they can't help themselves to any food outside. Make sure everyone in the home knows to starve your pet.

**Diabetic patients** – your pet will have specific requirements for their pre-anaesthetic starving and insulin requirements; please discuss this with a veterinary surgeon in advance of their procedure.

**Rabbits** – should **NOT** be starved, please allow them access to their usual diet as normal.

**Ferrets** – should only be starved for a short time before their anaesthetic, usually less than 4 hours, but for at least an hour. It is advisable they have an early breakfast around 6am on the day of their surgery.

## Before arriving at the surgery

### **Dogs:**

Please give your dog the opportunity to toilet on the morning of their surgery. For most procedures we need to clip some of your pets fur away and clean their skin to provide a sterile environment for their operation. This is much quicker and easier (and therefore a shorter anaesthetic for you pet) if they are clean and dry beforehand, so please try and avoid a muddy walk!

### **Rabbits:**

Please bring your rabbit a "packed lunch" for them on the morning of their surgery. It is important rabbits eat normally immediately before and after their anaesthetic to minimise the risk of post-operative ileus (a potentially life-threatening slowing of gut motility). If your rabbit is usually kept with a companion, it may be advisable to bring them to the surgery too to minimise the stress associated with being in a hospital environment.

If your pet has insurance and you wish to claim for their procedure directly through your insurance company, please bring an up-to-date copy of your pets insurance policy to avoid any problems with us extending this courtesy. You do not normally need to bring anything else with you for your pet, although if they are likely to be hospitalised overnight and have regular medication, it is advisable to bring this with you.

## At the surgery

All pets coming in for a procedure will have an admit appointment with a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse. This is so we can perform a health exam to ensure we are happy your pet is well enough for their procedure, answer any further questions you may have and complete the necessary consent forms. Once your pet is admitted they will be settled into one of our comfy kennels for the duration of their stay.

## Going home

When your pet is fully recovered from their anaesthetic and ready to go home, we will telephone you to arrange an appointment to collect them. At your collect appointment one of our veterinary surgeons or nurses will discuss your pets specific discharge instructions, explain any post-operative medications you need to give at home and arrange a follow-up appointment if required. They will be able to answer any further questions you may have at this stage.

## Overnight

Most pets are able to have free access to water as soon as they are home. We usually advise a light meal for cats and dogs the evening of their surgery; rabbits can have their usual food as normal. Your pets individual post-operative instructions will be given to you at your discharge appointment; if this is different to this advice for any reason we will make you aware of it. It is quite normal for your pet to not be their usual self after a general anaesthetic, but if you have any concerns about your pet after discharge then please phone the surgery. We have a team of dedicated night vets, based at our Thornbury hospital, who can provide advice about your

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