

Bitch Spey (Ovariohysterectomy) – What you need to know

The Day Before

- Please do not feed your dog 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 to bring your pet to the surgery for a preoperative examination by the vet, to discuss the procedure and estimated costs.
- The vet will:
 - Weigh your pet and perform a physical examination including checking for signs of your bitch being in season or having a phantom pregnancy. They will confirm with you when your bitch was last in season as correct timing is important
 - Discuss with you whether a pre-anaesthetic blood test is indicated to check basic liver and kidney function etc before going under an anaesthetic. They will also discuss with you whether intravenous fluids (“a drip”) is 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.*
 - Go through the consent form with you and will happily discuss any potential complications of the ovariohysterectomy procedure to allow you to give informed consent. Possible complications could include:

During the procedure	After the procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bleeding○ Anaesthetic reaction/thromboembolisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pain/swelling/infection of wound○ Suture material reaction○ Herniation/wound breakdown○ Ovarian remnant○ Stump pyometra

If you require further explanation of these potential complications or how they could affect your dog please ask your vet.

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

your dog will be positioned and prepared for surgery by clipping the hair under their belly and “scrubbing” with an appropriate antimicrobial surgical scrub solution. Your dog is then moved through to our surgical theatre, a final “scrub” performed and then she is ready for the surgeon to start the operation.

- An ovariohysterectomy requires a midline incision through the skin, the layers beneath and the muscle. The womb is a Y shape with an ovary at each upper point. Each ovary is located and exposed in turn, the ligaments attaching it are carefully broken down and the large blood vessels that supply it are ligated with suture material. The body of the uterus is then gently pulled out to expose the cervix which is again ligated with suture material. Once the surgeon is happy that both ovaries and the womb down to the cervix is removed and there is no bleeding, the abdomen is sutured up in three layers – muscle, subcutaneous tissue, skin.
- Your dog is then recovered from the anaesthetic and is monitored throughout recovery. Once up and about they will be offered some lunch and 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 dog up.
- At the discharge appointment a veterinary nurse will go through medications and after care with you and explain about post-operative checks.