



Laparoscopic Neutering/Spaying

A laparoscopic spay or neuter is where a female dog has its ovaries removed through a keyhole incision in the abdomen, using a specialised surgical camera (endoscope) and instruments. This method of neutering is associated with less pain and a return to normal activity more rapidly than with traditional open surgery.

Any female dog (and potentially cats) may benefit from a laparoscopic spay. There is less pain and a faster anticipated recovery. In large, deep-chested dogs, a concurrent laparoscopic gastropexy may also be performed as these dogs are at higher risk of a life-threatening condition called gastric dilatation and volvulus or GDV. During a gastropexy, the dog's stomach is secured to the body wall to prevent it from twisting into an abnormal position. For at-risk breeds, having both surgical procedures carried out at the same time takes away the need to have repeated operations.

In many ways the process is similar to the traditional spay, all aspects of pre-surgical preparation are identical. During laparoscopic neutering, one, two or three small wounds (5 to 10mm, depending on the size of the patient) are made on the dogs abdomen. Gas is introduced internally through the wound to increase working space and improve visualisation of the organs. A small camera is then inserted into the patient through the same wound to see the ovaries. Surgical instruments are inserted to remove the ovaries. The surgical wound (or wounds) are closed with absorbable stitches that do not require removal.

Laparoscopic Neutering at SCVS

As it happens in humans undergoing key-hole surgery, we do ask that we are given permission to convert to a more conventional approach during the procedure if required in the unlikely event that unforeseen circumstances arise.

The operation is performed on a day-patient basis. Most pets do not need to stay in overnight and are discharged from the hospital the same day. Occasionally, if the surgery is scheduled during the late afternoon your dog may need to stay overnight.

Those patients referred from other practices need to come with a full medical history from the referring vet who needs to be in agreement with the referral for neutering. At the time of discharge you will receive a detailed post-operative information sheet. Generally, we would recommend a post-operative check at your vet during the first week after surgery.

Scheduling a Laparoscopic Neutering at SCVS

If you are interested in requesting a referral for laparoscopic neutering then please discuss it with your vet and ask if he or she would be willing to refer your pet for the procedure. At Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists, we offer a fixed price procedure. Upon receipt of the referral information you will be able to make an appointment for surgery on a date that is convenient for you and your pet. As with conventional neutering of female dogs, we recommend that the surgery is performed at least 2 months following a season.

Advantages of Laparoscopy Neutering Over Conventional Spay Include:

- The pet is more comfortable post-operatively
- Smaller surgical wounds (0.5 to 1 cm compared to 6 to 15 cm)
- Fewer stitches
- A faster return to normal activity (after laparoscopic surgery only 5 days rest is required on average)
- Better visualisation of the ovaries and using advanced equipment to seal the vessels.