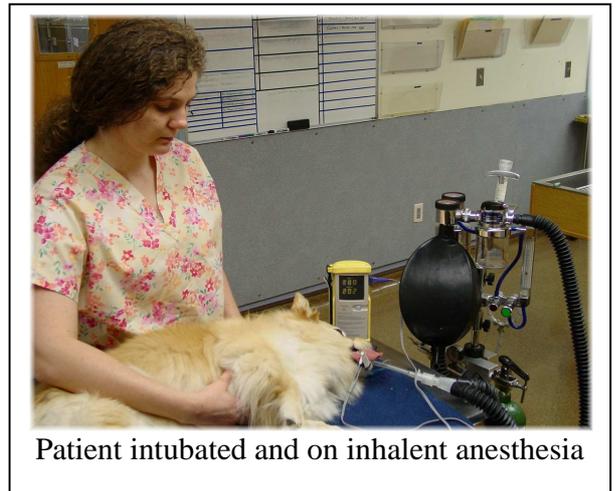


ANESTHESIA AND YOUR PET

Anesthesia is mostly used to perform surgical and medical procedures that would be painful or dangerous to the patient if they were awake. In some cases, patients are anesthetized for simpler procedures, where anesthesia would not be routinely used in human medicine, such as dentistry, radiographs, and small lacerations. These procedures would require the patient to be in strange situations or positions, which would be stressful or uncomfortable for the patient. Anesthesia is also used in situations where we have an excited or unruly patient that would make a routine procedure difficult to perform, or dangerous for the patient or our staff.

Our primary concern in every anesthetic procedure is patient safety. Just as in human medicine, there will be some risk of complications anytime an anesthetic drug (or any drug) is administered to a patient. That risk is always weighed against the benefit of being able to perform the procedure in question. Everything possible is done to minimize the risk to your pet. A working knowledge of your pet's medical history, careful patient evaluation before the procedure, and pre-anesthetic lab tests when indicated, are all used to make decisions about anesthesia and which medications will be used.



In general, the following protocol is followed for patients that are anesthetized. This will vary somewhat for patients with special needs, or for situations where a very short duration of anesthesia will suffice. First, a premedication injection is given that calms the patient and helps to prevent heart arrhythmias. Anesthesia is initiated with an intravenous injection, chosen based on the needs of the patient. An endotracheal tube is then passed through the mouth and into the upper airway. This insures an open airway, and allows us to administer oxygen and inhalant anesthesia for the duration of the procedure. After the procedure is completed, the endotracheal tube is removed once the patient is able to swallow on their own.



Patients are monitored while under anesthesia with electronic monitors like pulse oximetry and EKG. Most importantly, your pet is closely monitored during and after the procedure with the hands-on attention of our licensed veterinary technicians, our doctors, and our highly trained lay staff. We also make every attempt to stay current with advances in new drugs and techniques that would increase the safety for your pet. We understand that anesthesia for your pet can be an anxious time. Our staff is dedicated to making the process as safe as possible for your pet and we will be happy to discuss the procedure in greater detail in order to calm the worries of an anxious pet owner.

