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Anesthesia and Pain Control

By far the single detail that most pet owners are concerned with regarding surgical procedures is anesthesia. We would like to reassure you that the latest techniques are employed by the Veterinary Surgical Centers of the Delta – at VetCare Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Care Center in Dublin and that, in most cases, the same medications are used in your pet as would be used at any human hospital. Most pets who are otherwise healthy (i.e. eating and drinking normally, no vomiting, no diarrhea, no coughing, no sneezing, and who are not on medications) will be completely safe with our current anesthetic protocols. This is true regardless of the age of the patient.

The approach we use is considered to be a ‘balanced’ protocol. This means simply that we use a combination of drugs to achieve pain relief, prevent inflammation, and maintain an appropriate plane of anesthesia. Using a balanced protocol allows us to use less of each individual drug, thus allowing us to take advantage of the beneficial profiles of each, while minimizing any type of detrimental side effect. Pre-surgical administration of anti-anxiety drugs and narcotics concurrently is probably the best example this approach.

Throughout the night, after surgery, your pet will be monitored for heart rate, body temperature and breathing rate. These ‘vital signs’ allow us to determine the need for warming or cooling measures, adjustments to medical treatment, and the need for re-administration of pain-relieving narcotics. Some of the common side-effects of narcotics include constipation (may be relieved with early administration of Metamucil or other fiber supplement), sleepiness, or the opposite-excitement. Most of these side-effects may be diminished by reducing or adjusting the doses. Each individual pet is unique, and our staff is maximally trained at recognizing animal behaviors, moods and postures, to better tailor the appropriate dose for each circumstance.

If you have specific concerns, questions or other issues regarding anesthesia and pain control, please do not hesitate to speak with one of our doctors or trained surgical nurses to have these addressed before proceeding with any procedure.