



DESEXING YOUR DOG

Thank you for choosing us to desex your pet. This handout will help you learn about the procedure and what you can expect when you entrust your animal to us.

Here at Esk Vet & Fernvale Vet, we believe in the 'gold standard' of animal health care, especially when surgery and general anaesthesia is involved. Although desexing is considered a 'routine' surgery, there are risks associated with both the anaesthesia and the surgery itself. Our gold standard approach aims at minimising these risks as much as possible. Our desexing comes with risk-reducing procedures such as active warming, a detailed pain protocol and intravenous fluids as standard, all tailored to your pet, at no extra cost to you. Read on to find out what makes our dedicated team and gold standard approach so special.

What happens before the surgery?

Admission – Patients are admitted for surgery at 8:30am. It is important to ensure your pet has nothing to eat from 6:00pm the previous evening. Water can be given overnight, but taken away first thing on the morning of their surgery. When you drop your pet off, please allow at least 10 minutes to answer some questions and complete a consent form.

Pre-Anaesthetic Physical Examination – Our veterinarian will perform a physical examination of your pet during their admission. This is to assess their health and to tailor the safest anaesthesia plan for them.

Blood tests – Every anaesthetic carries a risk. Whilst we do everything we possibly can to minimize the risk, the best thing you can do for your pet is to opt for a pre-anaesthetic blood profile to be performed. We will have results back in 8 minutes. Our team will take a small sample of blood from your pet, and perform a full haematology (to assess the different cells within the blood) and a biochemistry to assess your pet's organ function. This is important to assess how well the liver and kidneys are functioning, as these organs process the majority of the anaesthesia. This gives us a more entire view of your pet's health status as well as a future reference for what their 'normal' is, and gives you peace of mind. For a small extra cost, it's a fantastic investment into your pet's health and something we strongly recommend.

Individualised Care and Attention – when you leave your pet in our care, our experienced nursing team will settle them into their new environment. They will be placed in their own individual cage, complete with soft, warm bedding.

Pre-medication – your pet will be pre-medicated prior to surgery. This helps to minimise any stress and allows them to settle before their anaesthetic. It will also include a pain relief component to ensure they are comfortable throughout their surgery.

Intravenous Catheter – our team will place a catheter into your pet's vein, making it easy for us to give them medication, intravenous fluids and anaesthetic.



What happens during the surgery?

Induction & Intubation – anaesthesia is induced with a drug given into the catheter in their arm. We then place a tube into your pet’s windpipe and place them on a gas machine. This keeps them asleep and provides them with oxygen throughout their anaesthesia, much like what is done in human surgery.

Monitoring & Care - during the procedure, your pet is constantly monitored by our experienced nursing team. Your pet will also be monitored by various machines to aid us in monitoring and recording their vital signs. A respiratory monitor shows how often your pet is breathing, a pulse oximeter reads your pet’s heart rate and the amount of oxygen in their blood, and an oesophageal thermometer records your pet’s core body temperature. We will also measure your pet’s bloody pressure during the entire procedure with our special PetMAP machine.

Active Warming – maintaining a normal body temperature is crucial to a smooth anaesthetic. Once an animal is anaesthetised, it loses its ability to regulate this itself. That’s where active warming plays a crucial role. Your pet’s core body temperature will be constantly monitored via a thermometer placed down their oesophagus, the tube leading to their stomach. Their temperature will be adjusted accordingly via a reflective body heat mat, strategically placed heat bags and our specialised Darvall Air Control Unit. This machine heats the oxygen that your pet breathes in, helping to maintain and regulate their body temperature.

Fluid Therapy – Your pet will be given intravenous fluids throughout the anaesthesia through the catheter they have placed in their arm. This increases the safety of the anaesthesia by helping to maintain normal blood pressure, and helping to flush the kidneys, minimising any toxic effects from the anaesthesia.

Procedure – In the female, the abdomen is clipped of hair and the skin is prepared for surgery. A full aseptic technique is used to ensure minimal risk of contamination and infection. A female desexing is major abdominal surgery, and we treat it as such. An incision is made into the abdomen and the reproductive organs, including the ovaries, oviducts, uterine horns and uterus, are removed. The incision is then sutured closed in multiple layers. The surgery is normally completed within 45-60 minutes.

In the male, the area just in front of the scrotum is clipped and prepared for surgery. A full aseptic technique is used to ensure minimal risk of contamination and infection. An incision is made just in front of the scrotum, and both testes are completely removed. The incision is then sutured closed. The surgery is normally completed within 30-40 minutes.



What happens after surgery?

Recovery – when your pet’s surgery is completed, and vital reflexes are regained, they are placed back in their cage, with sufficient bedding, where a member of our nursing team will monitor their recovery. More pain relief is given at this time, if necessary. They will remain with us until the afternoon for us to closely observe to ensure a smooth recovery.

Communication – once your pet is recovering in their cage, we will be in contact with you to let you know of your pet’s progress, and a suitable pickup time will be arranged.

Medications –we have a detailed pain relief protocol in place to ensure your pet is as comfortable as possible. Your pet will be given pain relief as part of their premedication, and then given an additional injection during their surgery to aid their recovery. We will then send them home with a further four days of pain relief.

Patient Discharge – We will require at least 10 minutes with you when you pick up your pet. During this time we will process payment, and a nurse will go through your pet’s important home care. An information sheet will also be provided for you to take home.

Home Care – when home, we advise to place your pet somewhere warm, quiet and comfortable away from young children and other animals. Offer them a small meal and water, but do not be concerned if they are not hungry that evening. Exercise needs to be restricted for a week or two after surgery, so no uncontrolled running or jumping. The stitches will be in place for 10 days. Please do not bath or allow your pet to swim during this time. Please bring your pet back 10 days after surgery for suture removal and surgical site inspection. This visit is included in the desexing price.

Once again, thank you for entrusting us with your pet’s care. If you have any further queries on the procedure, please contact one of our friendly team members. We look forward to seeing you on the day of the procedure.