

Laparoscopic Spay

The laparoscopic spay in female dogs (also known as key hole bitch spay) is a minimally invasive way of neutering female dogs and in selected cases, female cats.

The advantages of this advanced technique are to reduce the post-operative pain by reducing the size of the surgical wounds and the manipulation of tissues, allowing a faster recovery for your pet with a reduced resting time and recovery within just a few days.

The Surgery

- Your pet will be admitted for the day at your usual veterinary practice. A physical examination will help us ensure your pet is fit for general anaesthesia. We may also suggest a blood test at this stage.
- Your pet will be anaesthetised and prepared for the laparoscopic spay procedure. This involves clipping some fur on her abdomen and sides. The surgical technique involves passing a temporary suture to each side of the abdomen to suspend the ovaries. You won't see any wounds on the sides, just occasionally a couple of dots on the skin.
- Two small incisions are made in the middle of the abdomen, either side of the umbilicus (belly button!). The size of the wounds varies from 0.5-1cm. One of the wounds is used to pass a camera into the abdomen, the other wound is to pass the instruments into the abdomen.
- Gas (carbon dioxide) will be introduced in your pet's abdomen to expand it and allow visualization and safe manipulation of the instruments. The gas will be removed at the end of surgery but some residual "bloated" sensation can remain for the first 24 hours.
- The lap spay allows a detailed inspection of the ovaries and uterus (womb). If the uterus looks small and normal, only the ovaries are removed. If there is any change in the uterus (cysts, lumps or fluid inside), the uterus will be removed by creating a third incision or extending the second one a little. In some cases, we may need to convert the surgery in to a routine spay for this.
- The ovaries will be removed with the use of a vessel sealing device, and taken out through one of the incisions.
- The wounds are closed with internal dissolvable sutures so there are no visible sutures needing removal.
- Your pet will stay in for the day to be monitored until she is fully recovered and ready to go home later on the same day.
- She will be given anti-inflammatory medication to continue at home for 3 days.



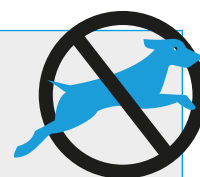
Complications

The procedure has significantly less risks associated and usually the bleeding is very minimal compared with the traditional methods. In the rare event there is any unexpected bleeding or complication, the procedure will be converted into a traditional spay. This means that there will be a slightly larger wound, and increased resting time (up to 2 weeks).



Aftercare

We routinely recommend 5 days of rest following a laparoscopic spay and after that your pet can return to normal exercise. The wounds take 10-12 days to be fully healed and sealed so care is needed to prevent them getting wet or contaminated. We would recommend using a surgical vest (pet medical shirt) to cover the whole body and prevent your pet from licking her wound. The vest is usually better tolerated compared with a buster collar and offers the benefit of covering the wounds, preventing them from getting dirty or wet when going outside.



Our smallest patients

This surgery may not be possible in the smallest breeds of dogs and cats due to the size of the abdomen and the limited space there is to manipulate the instruments. In these cases, it may be safer to perform a traditional spay as the size of the wound will not be significantly bigger than the two wounds of the laparoscopic spay combined.