



# The Pawprint: Online

Dutch Fork Animal Hospital

February 2015

## Anxiety About Your Pet's Anesthesia?

By: Jessica Sylvester, LVT

**In the world of veterinary medicine, anesthesia has come to play a large and crucial role in how we treat our patients.** Its wide spread popularity and frequency of use have not only caused a great surge in research for safer, more effective products, but has increased the range of medical services veterinarians are able to offer to improve your pets' health.



**Even though veterinary anesthesia has been in practice for many decades,** there is still a lot of fear and uncertainty associated with its use. We are

here to help alleviate some of those fears and better increase your knowledge of how anesthesia works and the associated risks that may be involved.

**When it comes to sedating a patient for a procedure several factors are taken into account.**

Each patient is assessed for overall mentation, age, current medications, previous medical history and respiratory, cardiac, and organ health. Based on these factors, each anesthetic patient will fall into an Anesthesia Risks Category that is used to help determine the most safe combination of anesthetic components for that pet.

In some cases, a pet will just not be healthy enough to risk an elective anesthetic procedure and a new treatment plan will need to be developed.

**At Dutch Fork Animal Hospital, we also recommend pre-anesthetic testing before sedation.**

Bloodwork is recommended for our younger patients or required for senior pets to evaluate kidney and liver function (the organs that process many of the anesthetic drugs out of the body). We also recommend performing an electrocardiogram, which helps to visualize heart function allowing us to better assess your pet's health status and candidacy for sedation. Once these tests are performed, a pain control sedative is given to relieve anxiety and an intravenous (IV) catheter is placed.

**The next step is the induction phase,** where anesthetic agents are administered through the IV catheter to provide smooth transition to an anesthetized state. This is followed by quick and careful placement of an endotracheal tube to ensure that an open airway is maintained throughout the procedure. Once this tube is in place, your pet is maintained on an Isoflurane gas and oxygen combination that is carefully monitored throughout the surgical procedure.



For our patients here, each individual is monitored constantly throughout every anesthetic procedure by a specially trained technician, as well as, by specially designed anesthesia monitoring equipment.



**Each patient is connected to a heart rate and respiratory monitor.** We use a Doppler and/or an electrocar-

# Dutch Fork Animal Hospital

1780 Dutch Fork Road. Irmo, SC 29063

P: 803-781-7483

F: 803-781-7462

www.dutchforkanimalhospital.com

dfah@dfah.net

## News and Upcoming Events:

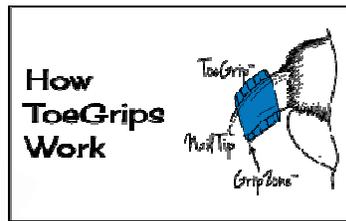
- **February is Dental Health Month!**  
(15% off of Dental Services)
- Now available for purchase:



Dr. Buzby's  
**ToeGrips**



Keeping in step!



## Anesthesia Continued...

diagram (ECG) monitor, along with a Breath Right monitor that is checked continuously by the doctor and surgical technician throughout the anesthetic event.



A few of the factors we are monitoring include your pet's respiratory rate, heart rate, gum color, body temperature, blood pressure, oxygen level, eye position, and jaw tone to further ensure that your pet is being maintained at an appropriate anesthetic level.

**Once the procedure is done, your pet begins their recovery period.** Recovery can be different for every pet and can change depending on what type of anesthesia is used, but begins once the patient is taken off of any anesthetic gas or when we inject a reversal agent to counteract the effects of previously administered sedatives. Once your pet has reached a safe level

of consciousness, they are allowed to rest comfortably in their run or cage with extra blankets and heat support with close monitoring until they are able to sit up or stand.

**Fortunately, with today's advancements in anesthetic agents, recovery happens more quickly and we are often able to send your furry baby home the same day.** Although every patient is different, most are nearly back to normal by the time you come to pick up after a sedative event. Some may seem more tired than normal once home or may lack a normal appetite, though many show improvement by the following morning.

**As always, please make sure to follow all at-home instructions and medical labels** to ensure the best results and recovery for your pet! If you have any questions or concerns, we are here to help! Just ask! We are always willing to hear any concerns and explain how anesthesia works and what you can expect in as much detail as needed!

