

## **Informed Consent**

### **Brachycephalic Airway Syndrome (BAS) Surgery/ Upper Airway Surgery/ Brachycephalic Airway Obstructive Syndrome (BOAS) Surgery**

Your pet has been diagnosed with a problem in the upper airway affecting, usually, multiple tissues in the airway that may cause obstruction, including stenotic nares, elongated soft palate, and/or everted laryngeal sacculles. There may be other abnormalities, but they cannot be surgically addressed. These abnormalities make it harder for your pet to breathe. You could think of it as breathing through a straw. When your dog is relaxed or sleeping, it might be just fine, but when your dog is excited, active, or hot (and panting), this obstruction hinders airflow and can cause them to try to pull more air in and they struggle to breath, and in doing so, they create noise as air moves past these “extra” tissues in the way. This can lead to a negatively self-perpetuating cycle where they try harder and harder to breath and inflammation, swelling, and obstruction prevent normal breathing and in the worst case scenario, a dog may die of suffocation. You have elected surgical therapy to treat this condition. The goal of surgery is to remove tissues that can be removed, in an effort to partially clear these obstructions. We can remove part of the nares, to widen the opening; we can remove part of the soft palate, and we can remove laryngeal sacculles that obstruct the airway. Unfortunately there is only so much we can do, but we can help. The prognosis after surgery varies, but is generally very good (excellent in young dogs). However, there are risks we need to make you aware of. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

The risk of complications after airway surgery is low, about 20% of cases. Here are some potential risks:

Swelling within the upper airway- this usually occurs within the first 12-24 hours after surgery but can lead to a worsening of clinical signs than prior to surgery- a greater difficulty in breathing after surgery than before. Treatments could include sedatives, steroids, and oxygen therapy.

Persistent difficulty breathing (dyspnea)- generally the severity of the airway cannot be fully assessed until the time of surgery. In some cases, especially older dogs, they can begin to collapse (stage 3 laryngeal collapse) their airway when they breath and surgery isn't as helpful in these cases, they continue to have difficulty breathing after surgery. There are cases described in which scar tissue develops in the upper airway that actually contributes to difficulty breathing.

Aspiration pneumonia- this can happen if your pet accidentally inhales food or water meant to be swallowed. Mild cases can be treated with antibiotics and home therapies, severe cases require hospitalization, oxygen therapy, and could be fatal.

Gastrointestinal upset- including vomiting and regurgitation is somewhat common in brachycephalic dogs after anesthesia and surgery

Rare complications may include anesthetic complications (death) and wound dehiscence (opening)