

Informed Consent

Lingual (Tongue) Surgery

You have elected to have your pet undergo a surgical procedure on the tongue. Usually this is for a mass of the tongue where the mass and a portion of the tongue is removed. Prognosis is generally very good to excellent after surgery, however, we need to make you aware of the risks and complications associated with this surgery. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

The risk of complications after lingual surgery is low, about 10% of cases. Here are some potential risks:

Hemorrhage (bleeding)- the tongue is a very vascular tissue and bleeding may be profuse in surgery and may continue into the post operative period

Dysfunction/difficulty eating and drinking- this can occur if enough of the tongue is removed where your pet needs to “re-learn” how to eat and drink after surgery. Generally this is temporary and if needed, other methods of fluid and nutrition support can be provided.

Infection- this is a risk with any surgery and is usually treatable with oral antibiotic therapy

Recurrence- if surgery was pursued to remove a tumor, if not enough tissue was taken or could be taken at surgery, the tumor may regrow.

Dehiscence- the incision may open and this may or may not require revision surgery

Drooling- also known as “ptyalism” this may occur if the tongue has a hard time keeping the saliva in the mouth, especially if a significant amount of the tongue is removed

Damage to tissues in the area could also include the salivary ducts under the tongue