

## **Informed Consent**

### **Maxillectomy or Mandibulectomy**

Your pet has been diagnosed with a disease or cancer affecting the upper (maxilla) or lower (mandible) jaw bone. You have elected surgery in attempt to remove the abnormal tissue. Generally, short term prognosis is good following this procedure, however, there are a few complications we need to make you aware of. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

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

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

Dehiscence (opening of the surgical wound)- the incision may open up, especially in areas of high tension. This can be managed medically, allowing it to heal, or revision may be recommended. Maxillary surgery wound dehiscence may include a complication of oronasal fistula (a hole or communication between the nose and mouth).

Hemorrhage- the tissues in and around the mouth and jaw are well vascularized and surgery in this area could produce life-threatening hemorrhage. Hemorrhage is typically moderate, however, life threatening bleeding, though possible, is rare

Recurrence or spread of any cancer/tumor- the goal may be to remove a tumor, however, we cannot see all these cells in surgery, so we have to make guesses about where the tumor may be and how much tissue to remove. The likelihood of recurrence or spread depends on the tumor type and how large or advanced it is at the time of surgery.

Cosmetic changes- generally, we can remove small or moderate amounts of the mandible (or mandibles) with little impact, but removal of more mandible or the maxilla impacts what your pet will look like after surgery. It's possible, you may find these changes undesirable.

Mandibular drift- if a significant portion of one mandible is removed, the other one has a tendency to "drift" to the middle. This may cause malocclusion of the teeth and removal of a canine tooth may be indicated (or other teeth may be needed to be removed)

Drooling (ptyalism)- can occur due to loss of tissues that normally contain saliva in the mouth.

Reduced appetite/ difficulty eating- depending in the extent of disease and the extent of surgery. Ancillary therapies may be recommended

Cats may have difficulties grooming themselves after surgery

When a significant portion of the mandible is removed, the tongue may protrude on that side due to the lack of dental arcade keeping it in the mouth

Ulcer formation- this can be due to the canine tooth (lower) rubbing on the skin after a portion of the upper jaw (maxilla) is removed

Rare complications:

Damage to tissues in the area could include muscle, nerves, blood vessels, salivary ducts/glands. Permanent damage is unlikely

Complications could also occur from tooth extraction, if extraction is required as a part of surgery and could include retained tooth roots and/or tooth root infection.