

Informed Consent

Total Ear Canal Ablation includes bulla osteotomy (TECA/TECA-BO)

Your pet has been diagnosed with a problem in the outer (external) ear canal. This is most commonly due to an allergy, which leads to chronic ear infections (chronic otitis) but in some cases, the otitis could be due to a tumor that causes the otitis. Chronic otitis can be painful, very itchy, and can affect quality of life. You have elected ear canal ablation to treat your pet. The ear flap (pinna) will remain, but the actual canal is removed surgically. The prognosis is very good to excellent with surgery, 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 TECA is low, about 15% of cases. Here are some potential risks:

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

Facial nerve paresis- this is VERY common after surgery and is usually the result of stretching the nerve during surgery. Paresis (weakening) is characterized by a droopiness of the face on the side of surgery plus an inability to blink the eye on that side. Usually this is self-limiting, but does require therapies to keep the eye lubricated (artificial tears ointment) in the mean time. Permanent damage (paralysis) of the nerve is very rare.

Cosmetic changes- it is common that dogs (and cats) with erect ears do not have the cartilage support after surgery and may have a “floppy” ear after surgery

Vestibular syndrome-if after surgery, your pet’s sense of balance becomes affected, it may or may not return. This is a very rare scenario.

Horner’s syndrome- this is a very benign, and usually self-limiting issue. The nerves that help supply they eye become inflamed and lead to a 1) dilated pupil (mydriasis), 2) elevated third eyelid, and 3) the eye can appear sunken in the socket (enophthalmos). Usually no therapy is required.

Abscess/draining tract- this can occur if too much of the middle ear tissues remain and may require additional surgery

Wound dehiscence (opening)- therapies may be required but not usually additional surgery

Damage to tissues in the area could include muscle, blood vessels and nerves- hemorrhage of significance could occur during surgery, it is moderate but not usually life threatening.