

Informed Consent

Elective Ovariohysterectomy (Spay)

You have elected for your pet to undergo an ovariohysterectomy (spay). This is the removal of the female reproductive tract, including the ovaries and the uterine horns. This procedure is very routine and prognosis is excellent. However, there are risks (less than 5-10% of cases) to make you aware of. There are risks with general abdominal surgery and the ovariohysterectomy, and both are discussed below.

Abdominal Surgery Risks

Skin incision infection- this is a risk with any surgery, and usually treatable with oral antibiotic therapy

Damage to abdominal structures- this could cause bleeding, or contamination by contents of the intestines or bladder

Adhesion formation (scar tissue formation in the abdomen)- scar tissue can impact the tissues in the abdomen in the future

Peritonitis- this is a rare but serious infection within the abdomen. If this occurs, additional therapies will likely be recommended.

Abdominal wall dehiscence (opening)- this can occur when the incision line used to close the abdominal wall fails. At first, the abdominal contents may stay covered by skin and subcutaneous tissue. However, once the abdominal incision fails, surgical revision is recommended. If the abdominal contents become exposed, emergency intervention is required.

Abdominal foreign body- very rarely, sponges or even instruments can be left in the abdominal cavity during surgery. We take precautions to ensure this doesn't happen, but it is possible.

Ovariohysterectomy

Ovarian remnant-if some of the ovary tissue is left behind, those cells may grow and produce hormones. Additional therapies may be recommended.

Damage to a ureter-the ovaries are located near the kidneys and the ureter. It's rare, but possible that a ureter gets damaged in the process of removing one of the ovaries. Additional therapies may be recommended.

Hemorrhage (bleeding)- this can occur during surgery or in the post operative period. Hemorrhage can be severe but is not usually life threatening.

Stump pyometra or granuloma- this is an infection at the remainder of the uterus and additional therapy may be needed.

Urinary incontinence- this does occur but generally responds to treatment. Long term treatment of mild urinary incontinence may be necessary in some patients.