

# Informed Consent

## Pyometra (Infection of the Uterus)

Your pet has been diagnosed with an infection within the uterus. You have elected a surgical therapy to remove the infected uterus. The surgical goal is ovariohysterectomy (spay). This is the surgical removal of the female reproductive tract, including the ovaries and the uterine horns. Although the surgery is straightforward, the condition surrounding the active infection increase the anesthetic and surgical risks. Prognosis is good, however, there are risks (20-30% 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

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 for Pyometra

Systemic complications/peritonitis- in severe disease, the problem can spread (before surgery, during surgery, or after surgery) beyond the uterus to affect the abdomen, and could then cause systemic effects including peritonitis, blood infection (sepsis), shock and death.

Secondary effects of the infection- the uterine infection can make your pet very sick and can affect other organ systems including the liver, kidneys, gastrointestinal system, and the arteriovenous system (blood vessels). This systemic infection may require concurrent

aggressive medical therapy to stabilize the patient. With timely intervention and appropriate treatment, these organ systems recover within a few weeks.

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 op period. Hemorrhage can be severe but is not usually life threatening.

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