

Informed Consent

Vulvar Surgery

You have elected to have your pet undergo a surgical procedure to address a problem with or in the vulva. Problems that we may be able to address include a tumor, a vaginal prolapse or uterine prolapse. In the case of uterine and vaginal prolapse, a spay (ovariohysterectomy) is usually recommended. Most of these procedures involve an episiotomy, where the vulva is incised, opened to address the issue (excision of tumor or prolapsed tissue) and then closed after surgery. Prognosis is generally excellent after surgery (though it may depend, in part, on the underlying issue). 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 vulvar surgery is low, about 10% of cases. Here are some potential risks:

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

Damage to the urethra- the urethra exits within the vaginal vault and it's location must be identified and protected. If the urethra is damaged, additional therapies may be needed.

Recurrence of any tumor- if the underlying cause was some type of tumor, we remove as much tissue as possible and/or as much as we can see and feel. We cannot see or feel the microscopic tumor cells, however, and there could be cells that remain that could spread after surgery, causing another tumor.

Hemorrhage (bleeding)- is common and can be profuse, but is rarely life threatening

Wound dehiscence (opening)- if the wound opens, additional therapies may be needed