

## ***Heart Mountain Animal Health***

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### **Consumer Guide to Elective Surgery**

Thank you for recognizing the need to spay or neuter your pet. Many people “shop around” for the best price on this surgery, without the knowledge of why the cost varies among veterinary practices. This guide was put together to help you find the best fit between the veterinary practice and your expectations for the care of your pet.

#### **Questions to Ask and Why to Ask Them**

##### **1. Will my pet receive a complete physical examination prior to surgery?**

This is important for a number of reasons. It is our first defense against performing surgery on an animal that may have infectious disease, a heart murmur, or be debilitated from parasites.

At Heart Mountain Animal Health, each animal is checked over and the veterinarian listens to the heart prior to giving any medications.

##### **2. What safety precautions will be taken with my pet during surgery?**

While most surgery is uneventful, emergencies sometimes arise. Early detection of impending problems greatly aids our ability to intervene and correct the problem. A breathing tube should be placed in most anesthetized animals. This keeps the airway open and allows for supplemental oxygen or gas anesthesia as needed. A heart (EKG) allows the surgeon to keep track of heart rate and rhythm. The practice should also have a “crash box” handy, which contains emergency drugs and supplies. Surgery should be done in a sterile manner (surgeon wearing gloves at the minimum).

At Heart Mountain Animal Health, a breathing tube is placed for all surgeries except cat neuters. An EKG is used, plus an assistant is present monitoring the heart and color. All surgeries are sterile; with Dr. Oursler wearing gloves, a gown, cap and a mask.

##### **3. What safety precautions will be taken with my pet after surgery?**

Surgery patients lose body heat through anesthesia and the opening of body cavities. If patients get too cold, the heart can be affected. Patient temperature should be monitored at regular intervals after surgery and supplemental heating provided as needed. Your pet’s gum color, pulse, and respiration should also be monitored.

At Heart Mountain Animal Health, all patients are on a hot water blanket during surgery and placed a warmed rice bag in a cage post-surgery.

##### **4. How will pain be controlled for my pet?**

This is very important - surgery hurts! The anesthetic will not provide pain control once the pet wakes up. Oral pain control medication should be offered.

At Heart Mountain Animal Health we give injectable pain medications before surgery that last 8-10 hours and most animals are sent home on additional pain medication.

##### **5. Will I receive written post-surgical care instructions for my pet?**

Aftercare of surgical patients is very important for proper healing. The hospital should provide written discharge instructions for your pet.

Heart Mountain Animal Health provides written instructions for spays and neuters.