

Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association

MVMA State Fair Surgical Suite – Information / Script

The MVMA Surgery Suite was started in **1992**.

Surgeries are performed at **10:00 am, 12:00 noon, 2:00 pm, and 4:00 pm**.

Thank you for volunteering! This is a great way to educate the public about the importance of Veterinary Medicine concerning public health which includes animal sterilization.

Important Phone Numbers:

MVMA office	651-645-7533
Kelly Andrews (MVMA)	651-895-6640 (cell)
Shelley Cravens, LVT (on site vet tech)	605-553-7451
Co-Chair: Krista Walkowiak, DVM	651-308-8160
Co-Chair: Travis Anderson, DVM	785-431-6744

Arrival Time:

- Please arrive 60 minutes prior to your scheduled surgery (e.g. 9am and 1 pm)
- Coordinate with surgeon, veterinary technician and veterinary student what needs to be accomplished
 - Surgical suite set-up, Pre- and post-surgical exams, animal medication, diagnostics (CBC, Chem, Coag panel, urinalysis, microphone set-up, video set-up)

Dress Code:

- Please wear what you would be comfortable wearing at your clinic (e.g. white coat).

Interactive Box (located in the suite):

- Explain and demonstrate materials used to anesthetize patients (e.g. endotracheal tubes, intravenous catheter, sedative/induction drugs and gas anesthesia).
- Diagnostics performed prior to surgery (e.g. CBC, Chem, Coagulation panel, Urinalysis)
- Explain and demonstrate materials used to perform surgery (e.g. instruments, spay hook, suture material and tissue glue). May also want to discuss equipment used in a Surgical Suite (ECG, pulse-ox, capnography, thermometer, NIBP, bair hugger)
- Explain and demonstrate materials used to identify lost pets (microchip and reader, stuffed dog with inserted microchip.)
- Audience questions and prizes

Important Information to Mention:

- Name, surgeon's name, technician(s) name(s) and the vet student's name.
- Acknowledge and thank the companies/sponsors that contribute products/equipment.
- Animal Shelter providing animals for the day and where they can be adopted from.
- Repeat, at several intervals, the instructions for those who may be feeling faint.
- Emphasize the goals of this demonstration: education about pet overpopulation, education about veterinary medicine, and that these dogs and cats may have a better chance of adoption if sterilized.
- Discuss the advantages to the individual animal of spay surgery, such as decreased risk of cancers, pyometra, and undesirable behaviors (heat, marking and roaming).
- Highlight the breadth of the veterinary profession and the valuable contribution of technicians & support staff.
- Point out the high standards of care (sterility, safety of anesthetic drugs, patient monitoring, etc.) in modern veterinary surgical procedures.
- We have many options for pain control in small animal medicine and we treat animals for pain before it occurs (before surgery), during surgery and after surgery.
- Point out our veterinary technicians now have title protection as MN has enacted licensure for technicians and they are LVT's instead of voluntary certification.

Unable to make your shift:

****If you cannot participate at the last minute for any reason—Please find your replacement and notify the MVMA office immediately.**

2026 marks the Surgery Suite's 34th year at the Minnesota State Fair!!

**MVMA will receive a 50-Year Award at the Fair on Saturday ,
September 5 for 50 years of educational exhibits when combined with
our Miracle of Birth Center!**

Surgery Script Outline Introduction (to be used when the animal is being prepped)

The Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association is pleased to welcome you to our State Fair Surgery Suite. We are excited to claim it our 33rd year here at the State Fair. Today we will be performing an ovariohysterectomy, more commonly known as a spay, on a female dog/cat (or a canine castration).

Did you know????? The word **SPAY** is from old French meaning to cut with a sword. Today its meaning has evolved to depict the removal of ovaries from a living animal.

My name is _____ and I will be your moderator for this surgery. I will describe the surgical procedure step-by-step and explain what you are seeing on the television monitors. There is a camera above the surgery table which will allow you to see the surgery that is taking place. The entire procedure, including the preparation, will take 40 to 60 minutes. For safety reasons, please keep the aisles clear during the demonstration.

Not everyone is comfortable with the idea of watching a surgery. There is no reason to feel embarrassed if you prefer not to watch, or if you feel uncomfortable during the procedure. But, if at any time during the demonstration you start to feel very warm, dizzy, or faint, do not try to get up and leave suddenly. Ask for assistance. If you are feeling faint, put your head down between your knees and ask your neighbor for help. Let me know right away. The stands are steep and we don't want anyone to fall.

The animals receiving the spay surgery today are from _____ (humane organization). These dogs/cats will go back to the humane organization and will be available for adoption. Photos of the dogs/cats and information about _____ (humane org) can be seen on both ends of the surgery suite. Humane organizations take the responsibility of managing pet overpopulation, and we join with them in this project to increase public awareness of the problem and education about the solutions. We hope the surgery on these dogs/cats will help them find adoptive homes, and provide an educational experience for you. Many veterinary and pet product companies have donated generously to allow this demonstration to take place. Their names are listed on the front of the suite, and we want to thank them for their support and their concern for animal health.

Pet overpopulation is a serious problem. Despite all their efforts to find homes for unwanted animals, humane societies and veterinarians across the country euthanize thousands of animals each year. **If a single pair of healthy cats and their offspring are allowed to breed without restriction, more than 80,000 offspring can be produced in 10 years.** Spaying and neutering are the best ways to keep our pet population under control. The procedure, as it is done in modern veterinary clinics today, is safe, effective, and makes the animal a healthier and better-behaved pet for its owners. The surgery area you see here in the suite is similar to what you would find in a veterinary hospital and the procedure is the same.

Of course, a spay surgery is only one example of the wide variety of procedures that veterinarians perform daily. Veterinary medicine is an interesting and diverse profession, ranging from dairy herd-health specialists to orthopedic surgery, from wildlife and zoo medicine to biomedical research and industry. There are over 1,500 veterinarians in Minnesota, and even more veterinary technicians and assistants. Technicians are a valuable part of veterinary practice. Their responsibilities include animal care and nursing, client education, laboratory work and more. If you have questions about veterinary medicine feel free to ask me, or contact a veterinarian in your hometown. We are very proud of our profession and will be pleased to answer your questions.

Today's surgeon will be _____. He/She will be assisted by Licensed veterinary technician Shelley Cravens, volunteer veterinary technician _____ and veterinary student _____ from the University of Minnesota - College of Veterinary Medicine.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS OF SPAYING/NEUTERING?

- Decrease pet overpopulation
- Decrease reproductive tract infections
- Minimize reproductive tract cancers
- Minimize urine marking
- Minimize roaming behavior

Pre-Surgical Prep:

This dog/cat has had:

- A negative heartworm test - if over 6 months of age (dogs only).
- A negative feline leukemia test (cats only).
- A fecal test for parasites or a dewormer.
- Distemper/hepatitis/parainfluenza/parvo combination vaccination if a dog, or a distemper/rhinotracheitis/calicivirus vaccination if a cat.
- A physical exam this morning.
- A test for normal blood clotting and a blood count which checks for anemia and infection.
- Blood chemistry screen for diseases like diabetes, liver or kidney disease.
- A combination of medications to help prevent pain and to sedate the dog/cat given 15 minutes ago.

Induction:

The anesthetic induction and surgical preparation of dog/cat will be shown on a pre-recorded videotape. This is not the dog/cat you will see in surgery, but she is having the same procedures performed in the prep room while we watch the tape.

- IV catheter placed to administer medications into the vein.
- IV induction with Ketamine/Diazepam, a common and safe combination.
- Intubation for oxygen and Isoflurane delivery. Isoflurane is a safe inhalant anesthetic; it puts minimal stress on the body and allows the animal to wake up quickly after surgery.
- IV fluids administered. Fluids are often not used for young, healthy animals in routine procedures but we are taking precautions because of unknown health history on these dogs/cats.
- Placement of a Pulse Oximeter in the Prep room to aid in the monitoring the patient's vital signs before surgery.

Surgical Prep:

- Surgical shave of abdominal or scrotal area; urinary bladder emptied.
- Surgical scrub of whole area with Betadine and alcohol 3 times.
- Transfer into surgery, placement on table and tied securely.
- A forced-air warming blanket placed around the pet to help maintain body temperature as close to normal as possible.
- Position camera, surgery lights and scrub one more time.
- Place Surgivet leads.

This surgical site preparation is one of the important responsibilities of the technician, who will then continue to make sure that dog/cat is doing well under anesthesia and throughout the procedure.

Surgeon's Prep:

- Put on clean scrubs, cover hair with cap, wear mask.
- Scrub hands with disinfectant soap and sterile brush for 5 minutes. This has been shown to reduce bacteria on the skin, just in case a glove is punctured or cut.
- Dry with sterile towels.
- Glove and gown. All surfaces that might touch the incision, drapes, hands, instruments, and suture are now sterile.

Surgery script (spay):

Ask the surgeon in advance about his/her procedure - multiple ligatures, ligation of vessels in the broad ligament or separate fixation of uterine vessels, type of closure.

1. Technician opens the pack, touching only the outside. All contents sterilized in an autoclave using pressurized steam.
2. Surgeon drapes to cover all of dog/cat except surgical site.
3. Incision through skin and subcutaneous tissue (mostly fat).
4. Incision through linea alba (means "white line"), which is the fibrous line where left and right abdominal muscles meet.
5. By cutting through the linea alba there is less bleeding and less pain for the dog/cat on recovery.
6. Uterus is shaped like a Y with 2 long horns, each leading to an ovary just behind the kidneys. Size of the uterus depends on age and reproductive history.
7. Ovary accessed, ovarian pedicle clamped and ligated. Cut. Pedicle observed for bleeding and then gently released back into place. Repeat other side.
8. Clamp off body of uterus above cervix, ligate (+/- fixate vessels), cut and remove uterus (discarded separately as biological waste in biohazard bag).
9. Closure in separate and distinct layers.

Surgery Script (closed castration):

1. Surgeon verifies that there are 2 testicles in the scrotum
2. Applies pressure to scrotum to advance one testicle into pre-scrotal area.
3. Incision through skin and subcutaneous tissues on midline.
4. Discuss difference between "open" and "closed" castration.
5. Discuss cryptorchidism.
6. Exteriorizes testicle and tears fibrous attachment between spermatic cord tunic and scrotum.
7. Places ligatures around entire spermatic cord.
8. Excises testicle.
9. Repeats on other side.
10. Closure in distinct layers, depending upon surgeon.

Suggestions of subjects to discuss during the spay procedure:

Three common techniques are used to close the skin; Sutures, Surgical Glue, Staples

- During surgery try to name and explain the instruments as they are used. Discuss the advantages of spay or castration to this dog/cat (no heats or unwanted pregnancies, reduced incidence of breast cancer, no ovarian cancer or pyometra, surgery has less morbidity and mortality than pregnancy).

- The benefits of neutering male dogs are: prevents enlargement and inflammation of the prostate gland, eliminates any chance of testicular cancer, prevents the desire to roam due to females in heat and therefore prevents unwanted litters, decreases the incidence of aggression between male dogs, and decreases the urge to urine mark. Please explain terminology that the public might not understand.
- Discuss role of technician in monitoring anesthesia (checks heart, reflexes, blood pressure, etc.) and the advantage of adjusting the concentration of the inhalant anesthesia to keep dog/cat at the appropriate depth.
- **Surgical Complications:**
 - Adverse reaction to anesthesia: apnea, hypo- and hyper-tension, bradycardia, tachycardia,
 - Bleeding: Pedicle, venous or arterial
- **Post-Op:**
 - Drapes removed and site cleaned.
 - Dog/cat moved back to prep area for monitoring, using Pulse Oximeter as an aid, and placed on another Bair Hugger warming blanket there.
 - Endotracheal tube will be removed when dog/cat can swallow.
 - Watched carefully as she recovers.
 - Technician will continue to monitor vital signs, such as heart rate and mucous membrane color.
 - Patient may wake up disoriented or nauseous, just like a human. Patient will be kept quiet and monitored the rest of the day. Most dogs/cats are sitting up and aware of their surroundings in a few hours. The dogs and cats will receive oral pain medication for 2-3 days.
 - Any skin stitches or staples will be removed in 2 weeks
 - Potential complications – i.e. dehiscence, licking at the wound, bleeding, infection.

This concludes the demonstration. Thank you for your attention. We hope this surgical demonstration was interesting and that it emphasized the importance of safe, healthy solutions to the problem of pet overpopulation. If you have questions, I will be happy to try to answer them.