

## Post Surgical Care for Brachycephalic Airway Surgery

Home patient care after airway surgery is critical to the success of the surgery. Please ask your veterinarian if you have any questions about these instructions.

Your pet had surgery for brachiocephalic airway disease and/or laryngeal collapse. The major components of this syndrome include stenotic nares (nostril openings too small), an overlong soft palate which interferes with normal breathing resulting in noisy respirations, and everted laryngeal sacculles (eversion or prolapse of the mucosal lining of the laryngeal crypts) which also interfere with normal respirations. Surgery is designed to correct these abnormalities thereby making it easier to breathe and reducing the noise associated with the syndrome. The goal of surgery is not to completely eliminate all the noise that is present pre-operatively, but to reduce it to a level that allows your pet to breathe easier and stop the progression of the syndrome. Without surgery, further collapse of the larynx can occur which can result in complete obstruction of the airway and collapse of your pet with strenuous exercise. Pets with this advanced condition will require debarking and a partial laryngotomy to further open the airway.

Please be aware that although your pet should be improved after surgery, their breathing will never be completely normal. Any patient with a compromised airway should avoid stress whenever possible. Also, activity should be limited to moderate levels and on hot days they should be kept in a cool environment. Lastly, an ideal body weight should always be maintained!

Complications were listed in the consent form but short term your pet can have swelling of the larynx can occur in the first few days that can obstruct breathing. If your pet has any respiratory difficulties, please see your doctor or emergency veterinarian immediately. Occasionally we need to do a second minor procedure to take slightly more tissue if your pet is still having long term problems after healing (about 3-4 weeks). Long term scar tissue can create a “web” across the airway opening several months after surgery that can also obstruct respirations and need revision surgery.

Some patients will need some mild tranquilization for a few days after surgery to prevent excitement and labored breathing which can cause swelling, edema, and bleeding in the airway.

Your pet had the following procedure(s) done:

- Stenotic nares correction with wedge resection with sutures
- Soft palate resection
- Everted laryngeal sacculles removed
- Debarking to open up airway due to laryngeal collapse
- Partial laryngotomy (arytenoidectomy to open airway due to laryngeal collapse)
- Temporary tracheostomy to protect the airway during healing
- Tonsillectomy

Follow Up Instructions:

- Purchase a harness for your pet and do not use any collars around the neck
- Remove tracheostomy tube in 3-5 days. Twenty four hour care is needed during this time to suction out mucous and blockages that could lead to fatal obstructions
- Soft food only for two weeks due to discomfort from surgery
- Allow water consumption in 8-10 hours post-operatively and soft food 18 hours post-operatively
- Recheck in three days to evaluate respirations
- Recheck weekly for three weeks to evaluate healing
- Tegaderm clear bandage can be left on until it falls off or at suture removal
- Start antibiotic tonight
- Start pain medication tonight
- Start cortisone tapering dose tomorrow
- Use tranquilizers as directed if your veterinarian prescribed them for your pet
- Weight loss is very important for healing and to decrease pressure on the trachea. Failure to lose weight can significantly affect the outcome of this procedure

**Please send a copy of this form home with the owner!**