



ENDOVET
R E F E R R A L S

Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy

Introduction:

At EndoVet Referrals, we provide advanced surgical options like laparoscopic cholecystectomy to ensure your pet's health and comfort. This guide explains the procedure, why it may be necessary, how to prepare, and what to expect during and after surgery. If you have further questions, our team is always here to help.

What is a Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy?

Laparoscopic cholecystectomy is a minimally invasive surgical procedure used to remove the gallbladder. This procedure is commonly recommended for pets with gallbladder disease, such as gallstones, inflammation, or infection.

Using a laparoscope (a camera-equipped endoscope), the veterinary surgeon carefully removes the gallbladder through small abdominal incisions. This technique reduces pain, recovery time, and surgical risks compared to traditional open surgery.

Indications for a Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy?

This procedure may be recommended for pets diagnosed with:

- Gallstones: Causing blockages or inflammation.
- Gallbladder Mucocele: A condition where the gallbladder fills with thick mucus, potentially leading to rupture.
- Cholangitis or Cholecystitis: Infections or inflammation of the bile ducts or gallbladder.
- Bile Duct Obstruction: Preventing the normal flow of bile into the intestines.

What are the alternatives?

The primary alternative is an open cholecystectomy, which involves a larger abdominal incision and more tissue handling. While effective, this traditional approach typically results in more pain, longer recovery times, and a higher risk of complications compared to the minimally invasive laparoscopic method.

Removing the gallbladder can alleviate these conditions and prevent life-threatening complications like rupture or bile peritonitis.

What are the risks?

Anaesthetic Risks

- Reactions to sedation or anaesthesia, particularly in pets with pre-existing conditions such as heart, liver, or kidney disease.

Procedure-related Risks

- Bleeding: Minor bleeding at the surgical site is rare and usually controlled during the procedure.
- Bile Leakage: If bile escapes into the abdomen, additional treatment may be required.
- Infections or Wound Complications: Rarely, the surgical sites may become infected or irritated.
- Conversion to Open Surgery: In rare cases, a more invasive approach may be required if complications arise during the procedure.

Our experienced team takes every precaution to minimise these risks and ensure a successful outcome.

Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy Procedure

Pre-Operative Consultation

- Pre-clinical examination of your pet.
- Procedure discussion with a senior surgeon.
- For long-distance clients, a clinical examination may be carried out by your local vet and a phone consultation will be arranged with one of our senior surgeons prior to surgery.
- Medical Review: Please inform us of all your pet's medications, including over-the-counter treatments. Certain drugs, like steroids or NSAIDs, may need to be paused, and special instructions apply for pets with conditions like diabetes or heart disease.

1

Admission & Preparation

- Withhold food for 6–12 hours before the procedure.
- Water: Restrict water for 2–4 hours prior to arrival.
- Please make sure your pet has had the opportunity to go to the toilet before arriving at the clinic.
- A team member will review the procedure with you, answer your questions, and obtain your consent.
- Your pet will undergo a clinical examination, and blood tests or imaging (e.g., ultrasound) may be performed to confirm the diagnosis and ensure fitness for anaesthesia.
- An intravenous catheter will be placed to administer fluids, anaesthesia, and medications if needed.

2

Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy

- Under anaesthesia, the laparoscope and surgical instruments are inserted through small incisions in the abdomen.
- The gallbladder is carefully separated from the liver and removed. The bile ducts are checked for any obstructions or abnormalities.
- Incisions are closed with absorbable sutures or surgical glue, and a small plaster may be applied to protect the surgical sites.

The procedure typically takes 60–90 minutes, depending on the complexity of the case.

3

Recovery & Monitoring

- Your pet will be closely monitored until they recover from anaesthesia.
- A small, bland meal will be offered before discharge.
- Most pets experience minimal discomfort due to the small incisions, and additional pain relief will be provided if needed.

4

Home Recovery

- Keep your pet calm and indoors (or on a lead for dogs) for 24–48 hours after surgery.
- Restrict exercise and vigorous activity for 10–14 days to allow the surgical sites to heal.
- Monitor the incision sites daily to ensure they remain clean, dry, and undisturbed.

5

Next Steps & Follow Up

- Most pets recover fully within a week and require no further treatment.
- Follow-up appointments are scheduled to ensure proper healing.

Further information

When to contact us:

Contact us immediately if you notice:

- Swelling, redness, or discharge at the incision sites.
- Vomiting, loss of appetite, or lethargy.
- Difficulty breathing or other unusual symptoms.

Contact Us

To Refer a routine case, please use the referral form on our website.

Call:
01543 373 033

Email:
Referrals@endovetclinic.co.uk

Our Services

To see our full list of services, visit:
www.veterinaryendoscopy.co.uk

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