



VETEMIS
R E F E R R A L S

Thoracoscopy

Introduction:

At Vetemis Referrals, we are committed to providing advanced diagnostic and surgical options for your pet. This guide explains thoracoscopy, why it may be recommended, how to prepare, and what to expect during and after the procedure. If you have further questions, our team is always happy to help.

What is a Thoracoscopy?

Thoracoscopy is a minimally invasive procedure that allows our veterinary team to examine and treat conditions within your pet's chest cavity. Using a small camera (thoracoscope) and specialised instruments, the procedure is performed through small incisions, providing a safer and less painful alternative to traditional open chest surgery.

This technique offers:

- Reduced pain and discomfort.
- Faster recovery times.
- Smaller surgical scars.

Indications for a Thoracoscopy

Thoracoscopy may be recommended for pets experiencing symptoms or conditions such as:

- Persistent coughing or difficulty breathing.
- Unexplained fluid accumulation in the chest cavity (pleural effusion).
- Suspected tumours or masses within the chest.
- Lung lobe torsion or chronic infections.
- Diagnostic biopsies of the lungs, pleura, or lymph nodes.

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

- Minor Bleeding: Small amounts of bleeding may occur but usually resolve quickly.
- Infection: Although rare, infection at the incision sites or within the chest is possible and can be treated with antibiotics.
- Pneumothorax: Air may enter the chest cavity, requiring additional management.

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

This procedure allows for accurate diagnosis and treatment of thoracic conditions, improving your pet's overall health and quality of life.

Thoracoscopy 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.
- A team member will review the procedure and any associated risks before obtaining your consent. Your pet will undergo a clinical examination, and blood tests may be performed to assess overall health. An intravenous catheter will be placed to administer fluids, anaesthesia, and emergency medications if needed.

2

Thoracoscopy Procedure

- Your pet will be anaesthetised to ensure they remain still and comfortable during the procedure.
- Small incisions will be made in the chest wall to insert the thoracoscope and surgical instruments.
- Depending on the findings, the veterinarian may:
 - Remove abnormal tissue or masses.
 - Obtain biopsy samples for laboratory analysis.
 - Drain fluid or air from the chest cavity.

The procedure typically takes 30–60 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.
- Mild discomfort at the incision sites or temporary changes in breathing patterns are normal for 24–48 hours.
- Additional pain relief will be provided if needed.

4

Home Recovery

- Keep your pet calm and restrict activity for 7–10 days.
- Prevent licking or chewing at the incision sites by using an collar if necessary.
- Follow all medication instructions provided to manage pain and inflammation.

5

Next Steps & Follow Up

- Most pets recover fully within two weeks.
- Follow-up appointments will be scheduled to ensure proper healing and monitor for any complications.

Further information

When to contact us:

Contact us immediately if you notice:

- Difficulty breathing or rapid breathing.
- Persistent coughing or gagging.
- Signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, or discharge at the incision sites.
- Unusual lethargy or loss of appetite.

Contact Us

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

Call:

01543 373 033

Email:

Referrals@vetemis.co.uk

Our Services

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

Vetemis Referrals

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