

What is laparoscopy?

Laparoscopy is a minimally invasive technique for viewing the internal structures of the abdomen. A laparoscope (camera) inserted through a small incision in the body wall magnifies images on a TV monitor allowing for a more thorough examination. Additional small incisions are made to facilitate the use of surgical instruments. The most common application of laparoscopy is biopsy. In recent years, laparoscopy has been adopted as a less traumatic and less painful alternative to traditional spays.



About the surgeons



Fraser Goldie is one of the small animal vets based at our Dundee surgery. He completed a post graduate certificate in small animal surgery in 2012 and became a Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons advanced practitioner in early 2016. Following this, he has undertaken further training in the use of laparoscopic surgical techniques in addition to performing more traditional soft tissue and orthopedic surgery.



Katie Wallace is another of our small animal vets based at the Dundee surgery. She has an interest in general surgery and completed her laparoscopic training in early 2018. She now offers laparoscopic spays in addition to more advanced minimally invasive procedures.

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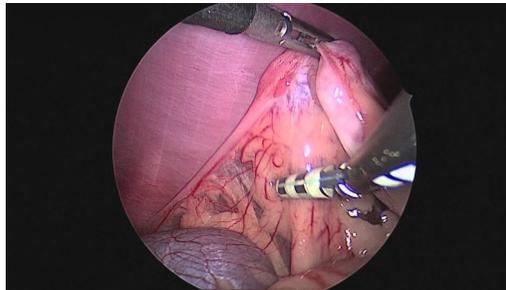
Traditional spays



In a traditional spay, up to a 10cm incision is made in the abdomen through which the ovarian ligament is broken down. This allows access to the ovaries, however does involve a degree of tension which can lead to bruising and some post operative pain. The wound requires stitches to be in place for a minimum of 10 days during which time exercise has to be restricted. Some dogs also need to wear a buster collar or T-shirt to prevent them licking the wound.

Laparoscopic spays

When performing a laparoscopic spay, the procedure is carried out through two or three tiny incisions in the abdomen, typically 0.5-1cm in size. The procedure is performed with magnified views of the organs allowing for greater precision. The ovarian ligament is carefully cut and cauterized, rather than torn. Laparoscopic spay wounds are stitched using dissolvable suture material and glue, meaning there is nothing to remove post operatively. Normal exercise can usually be resumed after only two days rest and rarely do dogs show any interest in licking their wounds.



Advantages of Laparoscopic spays over traditional surgery

- Laparoscopic spays cause less surgical stress and up to **65% less post operative pain** than traditional open surgical spays
- The entire surgery is performed through a few **tiny incisions** rather than a larger abdominal opening. Smaller incisions are less painful and reduce recovery time
- Controlled incisions **eliminate pain and bruising** caused by the tearing of tissue associated with traditional spays
- Laparoscopy allows for **better visualisation** of the abdominal organs
- **Additional procedures** can be performed at the time of spay (e.g. gastropexy in large dogs to help prevent twisted stomach)
- Healthy dogs weighing a **minimum of 10kg** are eligible for laparoscopic spays, however in future it is hoped pets of all sizes will be able to benefit