

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 as a less traumatic and less painful alternative to traditional spays, however procedures such as organ biopsy and retained testicle removal in male dogs are also ideally performed via this method.



Laparoscopic surgeons



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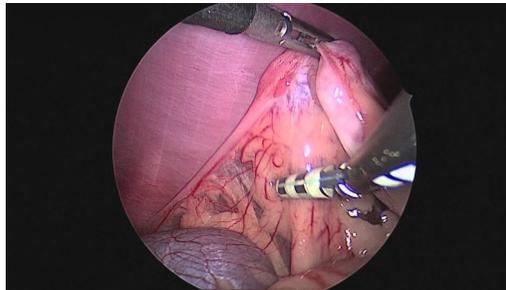
Traditional spays



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 upwards of around 5kg are eligible for laparoscopic spays. Please ask your vet for more information if your dog is lighter than this