

# Laser Surgery and Your Pet

*A Less Painful Alternative for Your Pet*

**O**ur hospital remains on the cutting edge of veterinary medicine and surgery by offering CO2 laser surgery. This handout will describe what a laser is and how your pet can benefit from this exciting technology.

## ***What is a Laser and how does it work?***

LASER is an acronym for Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission Radiation. In short, it is a device that generates a beam of light energy at a specific wavelength. The first laser was developed in 1960 with widespread use in human surgery in the late 1980's. The most commonly used surgical laser is the CO2 laser. The wavelength of the CO2 laser beam is absorbed into the water found in skin and other soft tissue, vaporizing the cells thereby "cutting" tissues. The surgeon can control the extent to which it is absorbed into the surrounding tissue, allowing extreme surgical precision. The laser is superior to stainless steel surgical blades for many procedures. This exciting and important technology is used daily by the doctors of our facility to provide the most advanced and compassionate in pet health care for your pet loved one.

## ***What are the benefits of laser surgery for my pet?***

**There are three major advantages of laser surgery over traditional stainless steel for our patients: Decreased Pain, Reduced Bleeding and Blood Loss and Reduced Risk of Infection.**

**Decreased Post-Operative Pain** is accomplished when the laser seals the nerve endings as it cuts. This reduces pain impulses from the surgery site. Additionally, many skin tumors can be removed using local anesthesia ("numbing" of the skin) rather than having the pet undergo general anesthesia.

**Reduced Bleeding and Blood Loss** is achieved through cauterization of blood vessels as the laser beam vaporizes the tissues.

**There is a reduced Risk of Infection** due to the superheating of the tissues in the incision site that destroys any bacteria. These three advantages make laser surgery the safest and most comfortable choice for your pet.

## ***What surgeries can be performed with the laser?***

Almost any soft-tissue surgery may be performed with the CO2 laser. Routine procedures such as spays and neuters are commonly done with the laser. We perform feline declawing surgery using the laser. The CO2 laser is also used for skin tumor removal, eyelid and mouth surgeries. Your veterinarian will discuss if CO2 laser can be used during your pet's surgery.

Be sure to ask our hospital if you have any questions about CO2 laser surgery.