



JACKSONVILLE VETERINARY SURGERY & ORTHOPEDICS

LAPAROSCOPIC ASSISTED GASTROPEXY (LAG)

WHAT IS LAPAROSCOPIC ASSISTED GASTROPEXY?

Laparoscopic Assisted Gastropexy (LAG) is a prophylactic treatment for the prevention of gastric dilatation-volvulus (GDV) or “bloat” in dogs. GDV occurs when the stomach fills with gas and fluid and twists on itself, quickly obstructing blood flow to the stomach and abdominal organs. If left untreated, this can rapidly progress to shock and death. Fortunately, GDV can be prevented with a procedure called a gastropexy, also referred to as stomach tacking. When properly performed, a gastropexy can reduce the risk of GDV to almost zero. Gastropexies can be performed during an open abdominal surgery or as a minimally invasive procedure with the laparoscope.

WHICH DOGS BENEFIT THE MOST FROM LAG?

LAG is recommended for dogs at risk of developing GDV. This includes large, deep chested breeds such as Great Danes and German Shepherds or dogs with a first degree relative that has had GDV. Other factors to consider include previous episodes of gastric bloat, owners with other large breed dogs that have had GDV and valuable working or therapy dogs.

HOW IS LAG PERFORMED?

Under general anesthesia, a small incision is made just past the umbilicus (belly button) to insert a camera into the abdomen. The camera allows the surgeon to visualize the stomach and a second slightly larger incision is made just behind the ribs on the right side. Under direct visualization, the stomach is brought up to the second incision and sutured to the inner muscular layer of the abdominal wall creating a permanent adhesion, the gastropexy. A photograph of the completed gastropexy is taken with the laparoscope and given to the owners for their records.

CAN MY DOG BE SPAYED OR NEUTERED AT THE SAME TIME?

In most cases, yes. Female dogs can be spayed (ovariectomy) with the laparoscope. This requires making one additional small incision. Male dogs can be neutered while anesthetized. If a male dog is cryptorchid (retained testicle), this can also be removed with laparoscopic assistance.

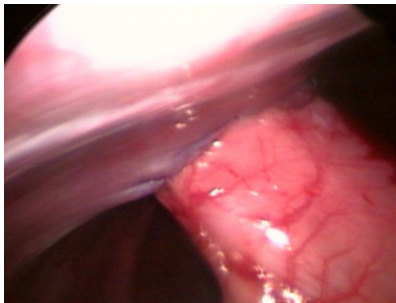


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WHAT IS THE RECOVERY FROM LAG?

Since LAG is a minimally invasive procedure, recovery is very quick. Most dogs go home from the hospital the same day or the following morning. Pain medication is prescribed for the first few days to be used as needed. Dogs can eat and go on short walks several hours after surgery. Activity is limited to short leash walks only for the first two weeks after surgery, then normal activity can be resumed. Complications after LAG are rare but may include incisional infections, inadvertent organ trauma during introduction of the laparoscope or conversion to an open surgery. It is important to remember that gastropexy does not prevent gastric bloat, it prevents volvulus which is the life-threatening twisting of the stomach.



Intraoperative image of a completed Laparoscopic Assisted Gastropexy



Postoperative appearance of a German Shepherd after Laparoscopic Assisted Gastropexy