**Glen Mills Veterinary Hospital**

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**PRE-ANESTHETIC LABWORK**

Pre-anesthetic labwork is an important first step when you’re planning general anesthesia and surgery for your pet. Your pet’s age and breed will help dictate which tests are important to assess prior to the procedure.

A chemistry blood test assesses important proteins and electrolytes and importantly screens for potential dysfunction of the liver or kidneys, two primary organs involved with the metabolism of anesthetic agents and medications.

A urinalysis is looked at in conjunction with the chemistry results. Certain types of diseases, including early stage kidney failure, will show up on a urinalysis prior to creating abnormalities on bloodwork.

A CBC blood test screens for underlying anemia (low red cell count), infection, inflammation and low platelets - which are imperative for clotting.

A T4 thyroid blood test is sometimes included in the pre-anesthetic labwork because deficiencies or elevations in T4 can have important consequences on the pet’s overall health.

We always look to address any medical complications prior to a procedure to minimize the risk associated with surgery and anesthesia. When problems are identified, a change in drug or procedure may be all that is needed and in other instances, the procedure may be postponed and a new medical plan may be created.

Some owners ask about the necessity of labwork in a pet that is seemingly healthy at home. It’s a good question. Pets that appear healthy on the outside can harbor important diseases internally that have not triggered prominent signs yet.  Kidney, liver, and blood clotting disorders are often hereditary and can exist even in puppies and kittens. In addition, older pets can be asymptomatic in the early stages of certain diseases because a patient’s immune system or intrinsic compensatory mechanisms have kicked in to create temporary stability.

Anesthesia is well tolerated in a stable animal but can trigger the undesirable result of acting as a catalyst for occult disease in a pet that is already immune-compromised.

Our goal is to make anesthesia and surgery as safe as possible for your pet! We understand how important your pet is to your family and we are committed to offering them the best care when you choose our hospital for your pet’s procedure.

Please talk with us if you have any additional questions. Our staff would be happy to discuss things with you.