

Running an Efficient Operating Theatre: Patient Safety Considerations During Surgery and Dentistry

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Theatre Workflow

- How does this contribute to patient safety?
- Appropriately maintained and prepared operating areas contribute to procedures being performed efficiently and safely.
- Veterinary technicians vital to patient care during surgical procedures. Role assignment?
- Knowledgeable of infection control and troubleshooting equipment issues. Organisational skills maintains

The Veterinary Technicians Role

- Communicating with owner
 - Organising theatre
 - Nursing care of patient
 - Patient preparation
 - Preparation of surgical site
 - Anaesthesia monitoring
 - Dentistry assessment and cleaning
 - Scrub or circulating theatre nurse
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- The contributions we make as a team ensure successful outcomes for the patients under our care.



Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

- Mandatory for most areas of the veterinary practice.
- Vital for staff training, ensuring procedures performed to standard, reducing mistakes.
- Ensures equipment used and maintained appropriately.
- Risk assessments also required.

The Admit Appointment

- Communicate procedure and plan with the owner.
- Opportunity to gather important information from owner. i.e last fed, medications, confirm patient identification, operating site, post operative period, any changes since last appointment. Any concerns? Confirm contact information

Procedure Checklists

Dentistry Safety Checklist

SIGN IN (to be read out loud)

Before induction of anaesthesia

Identify patient, procedure verified and consent been given?

YES

REBUS CODE

History checked? previous dental procedure?

Date the procedure

Pre-ASA checks required?

Any other procedural requirement?

Confirm surgical site

Chin ready

Anaesthetic machine and medication check complete

YES

Does the patient have a known allergy?

YES NO

Difficult airway/ventilation risk?

YES NO

Risk of 15% blood loss?

YES

Yes and adequate IV access/fluids planned

Placed position in theatre known?

Anaesthetic at induction? Yes/No

Estimated surgery time is

Team discusses perioperative plan & designates roles

Any concerns?

TIME OUT (to be read out loud)

Before start of surgical incision

Theatre team introductions

Surgeon, Anaesthetist and Nurse/Assistant

What is the patient's name?

Procedure, site and position are confirmed

Surgeon

Antisepsis checked last?

Are there any specific equipment requirements or special investigations?

Are there any critical or unexpected steps you want the team to know about?

Anaesthetist

Any blood or patient specific concerns?

Has a ASA grade

REBUS CODE is

What monitoring equipment and other specific items of support are required e.g. blood?

Nurse/Assistant

Is the clarity of instrumentation confirmed?

Pharyngeal mouthpiece and endotracheal tube secured under the chin?

Are there any equipment issues or concerns?

Number of waste counted

Surgical site infection prevention

Antibiotic prophylaxis within the last 60 minutes

Patient warming: Start temperature

SIGN OUT (to be read out loud)

Before any member of the team leaves the operating room

Theatre team/assistant verbally confirms with the team

Check the name of the procedure is recorded?

Has it been confirmed that equipment, waste and waste counts are complete?

Check the equipment team leader: (including patient name) **Yes/No**

Check any equipment problems been identified?

Has a team to be identified?

Check the patient being transported and ensure team members (including those from the theatre)

Surgeon, Anaesthetist and Theatre Nurse/Assistant

What are the key concerns for recovery?

Is a transfer order required?

Patient Details

Name

DOB

Case number

Procedure

Theatre Staff (Initials)

Surgeon

Anaesthetist

Theatre Nurse/Assistant

Theatre number

U/S Move Procedure

Dentistry Safety Checklist

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Team warming and Active/Passive

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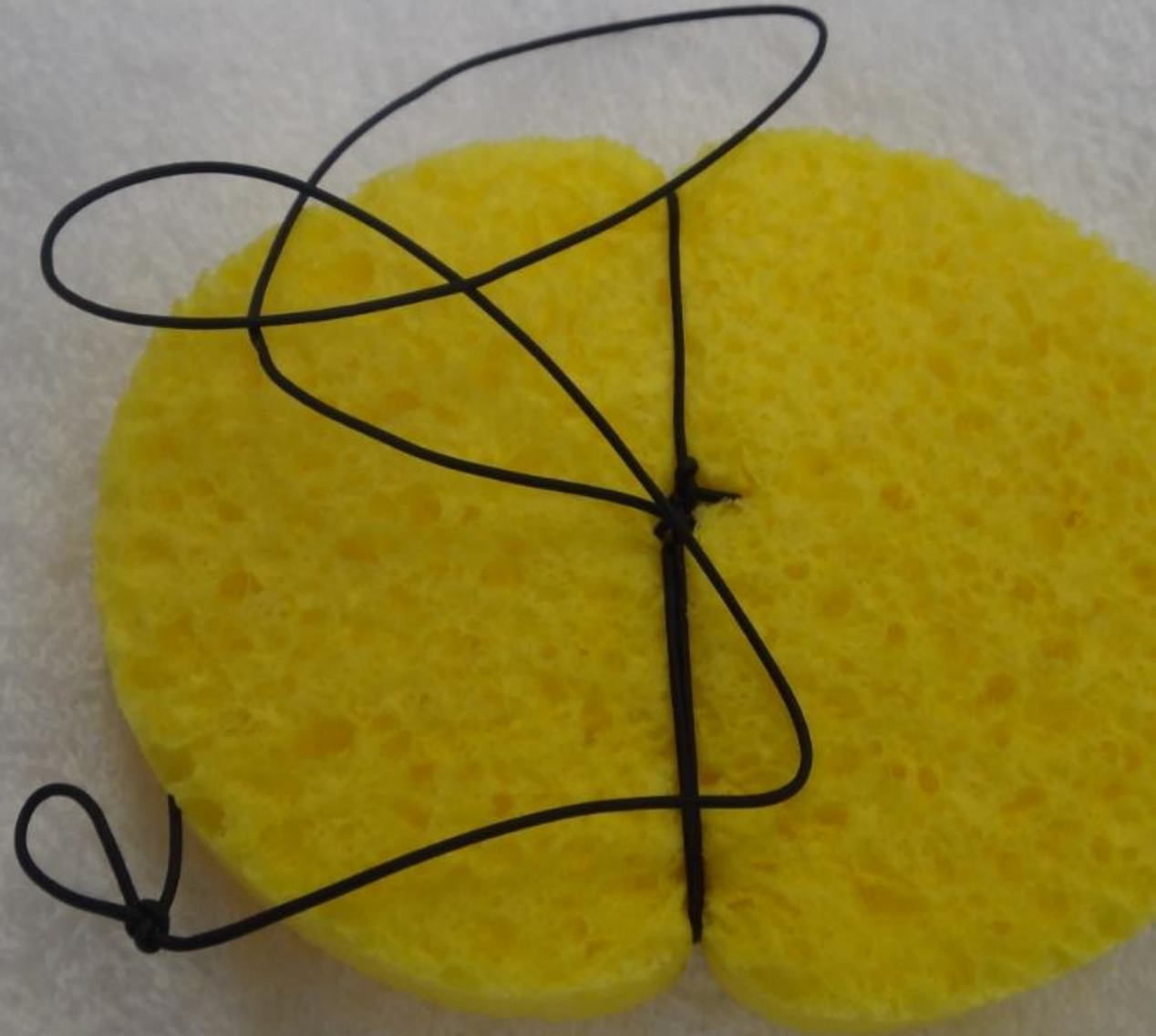
Patient Preparation for Surgery

- Induction of Anaesthesia. Checklist
- Veterinary Technician or Assistant Prepares surgical site.
- Confirm surgery site.
- Clip hair
- Scrub site in aseptic manner.



Preparation for Dentistry

- Eye lubrication-just as important
- Complete dentistry checklist
- Confirm if throat pack used
- Ensure patient details on dental chart and dental xray system to save time.
- Establish team responsibilities



Role of the Circulating Nurse

- Dentistry- Nurse led assessment stage and can prepare additional equipment. Reducing time.
- In theatre- ensures smooth running during procedure. Available to contact other team members if any concerns.
- Anaesthesia technician and Scrub nurse/assistant will also play a very important role in maintaining patient care.

Post operative Recovery

- Close monitoring throughout recovery.
- Ensure signing out section of checklist completed.
- Complete clinical notes and thorough handover-communication.
- Watch out for hypothermia, hypoxia and perform pain assessments.
- Nutrition.
- Discharge patient after appropriate recovery period.
- Discharge instructions
- Post operative check ups.

Team Work: Human Factors

- Unsuitable working environments and incivility can compromise patient care.
- Leads to poor communication and lack of teamwork.
- Improving awareness can result in positive behaviour change and improved decision making.
- [Vetled - Veterinary Human Factors Training & Consultancy, UK](#)
- [Veterinary | Human Factors Training Solutions | Being Human](#)
- RCVS Academy

What do we do when things go wrong?

- Reporting concerns/mistakes immediately.
- Perform clinical audits and review as a team.
- Implement recommendations
- Quality improvement training.
- However, implementing safety measures, performing best practice vet med, using checklists and recording information reduces occurrences of complications.
- Double checking medications, calculations, anaesthesia set up, surgical sites

Summary

- Identify potential issues early on.
- The importance of checklists and communication
- The technician's role in patient care and how this avoids complications.
- Quality improvement.