

Rabbit Castration: Admission



Between 8-8.30am on the morning of surgery your rabbit will be admitted to the hospital by one of our surgery nurses.

She will go through the admission paper work with you, treatment plan and any questions or concerns you have before the procedure.

Please bring in some food from home (pellets and/or green food) so that we can encourage your bunny to start eating as soon as they have recovered from the anaesthesia.



We will also make sure that we have contact phone numbers for you so that we can call you during or after the procedure with any updates.

Pre-op check

Once admitted your rabbit will be given a pre-anaesthetic examination by our qualified nursing staff. They will check your rabbit's body weight and assess heart rate and rhythm, gum colour and temperature to ensure that they are fit and well enough to under-go their procedure.



Nurses
checking
rabbit's heart
sounds

Anaesthetic

Your bunny is then given an anaesthetic injection into the muscle of the back leg. At The Vet Centre anaesthetic safety during surgery is our main priority, so we use the safest anaesthesia protocols for your rabbit based on their breed, age and health.



The anaesthetic injection is given into the back leg

Rabbits are more sensitive under anaesthesia than cats and dogs, and they can become hypothermic (cold) – so we used heat pads, hot water bottles, and bubble wrap to keep them warm during the surgery (see photo).

A constant flow of oxygen via a special rabbit face-mask and monitoring of breathing and heart rate is carried out during the surgery.

They have a fully qualified veterinary nurse monitoring them during the entire procedure and into recovery until they go home.



Monitoring the anaesthetic and ensuring rabbit is nice and warm during the procedure

Surgery Preparation

Once your pet has reached a stable level of anaesthesia after the injection, they are then prepared for surgery – the skin over the scrotum will be clipped (shaved) and it is cleaned with chlorhexidine and to ensure sterility.



Vet clipping the skin on his scrotum for surgery



Scrubbing the skin prior to surgery

Surgery

Surgery is carried out in aseptic conditions with your vet scrubbing their hands with chlorhexidine soap and wearing a hat/mask and sterile gloves during the procedure.



Vet scrubbing for surgery

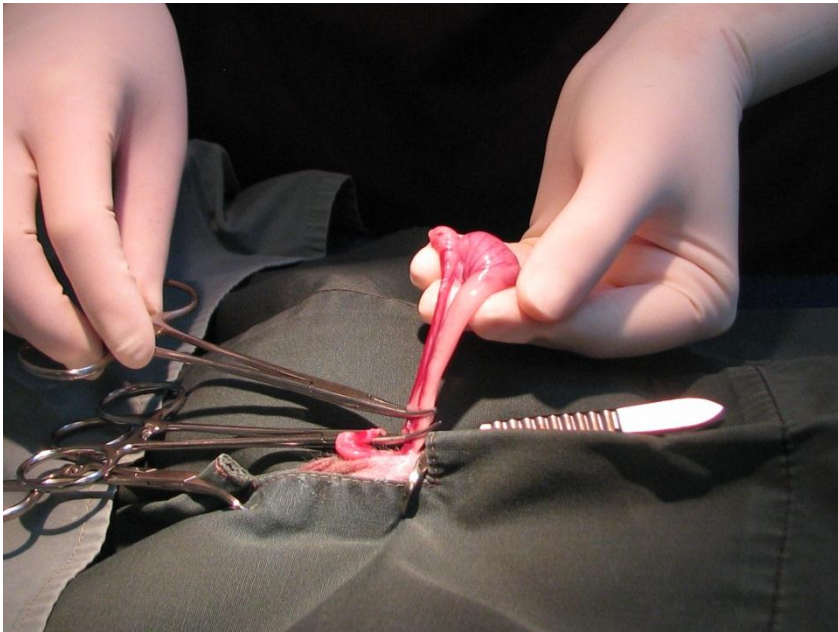
Your rabbit's scrotum is covered with a sterile surgical drape and a sterile surgical kit is opened especially for their surgery.



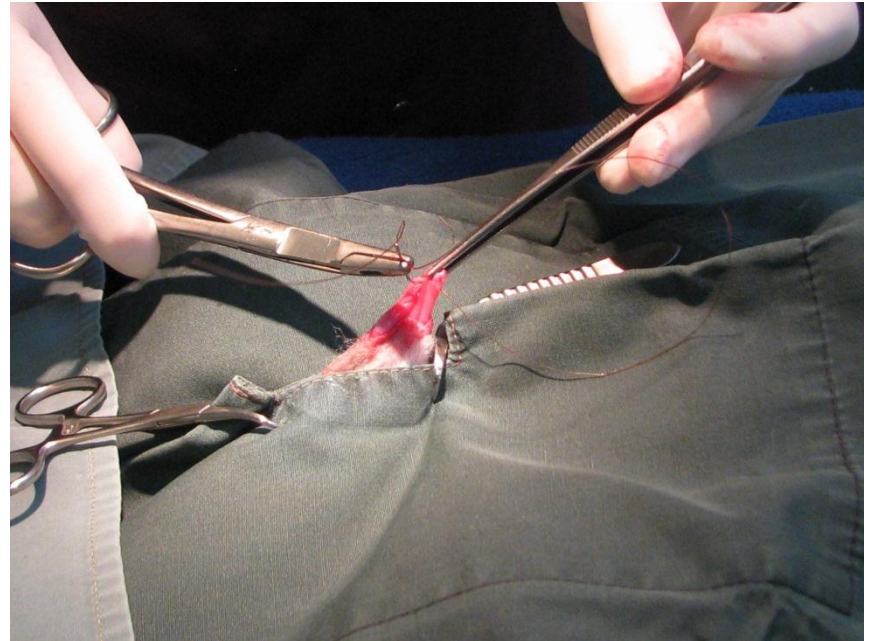
Making an incision in the skin over the testicle

The castration surgery involves making an incision in the skin over each testicle and removing the testicle by ligating the blood vessels.

The muscle layer/tunica is closed with absorbable sutures, and the skin edges are rolled together to close the incision. The skin is not sutured in rabbit castrations as the incision is small and heals quickly.



(1.) Vet removing testicle and ligating vessels



(2.) Suturing scrotum with absorbable suture material

After your vet has completed the procedure, they will administer three more medications –

- long acting pain relief injection
- anaesthetic reversal injection (so your pet wakes up quickly and safely)
- metoclopramide injection (which stimulates gut movement to reduce the chance of your rabbit developing gastric stasis – a condition where food stops moving along the digestive system)



How the scrotum appears immediately after castration



Injections are given after surgery to aid recovery

Post-op

They are then transferred into a recovery cage. Their dedicated vet nurse will continue to be with them and ensure that they are kept warm (blankets, heat pads and hot water bottles are used) and comfortable in recovery.

As it is important for rabbits to start eating as soon as possible following an anaesthetic (to aid gut movements) we feed them small amounts of pureed apple via a syringe as soon as they are awake enough to swallow. Once they are up and about, they are offered the food you brought from home.



Nurse monitoring recovery



Encouraging the bunny to eat to aid gut motility

Discharge

When in recovery one of our nurses will phone you and let you know how the surgery went and give you an update on how your pet is doing.

They are normally able to be collected after 3pm.



At discharge your nurse will go through written instructions on how to care for your pet at home and also book them in for a post-operative recheck, usually 5-7 days later.

