

Project DRAPES: Owner information form

Study Title: Reusable versus disposable drapes: does their use affect post-operative surgical site wound complication rates in routine surgeries?

What is this study about?

When pets undergo castration or spay, it is usual procedure to cover their body with a surgical drape to keep dirt and hair away from the surgical site. Vets can currently choose to use reusable cloth drapes, which are washed and sterilised between surgeries, or disposable paper or plastic drapes.

There is no evidence to suggest either one is better or worse for the patient, or affects post-operative wound complications such as infections. However, there is evidence that reusable drapes have less environmental impact. Therefore in this study, we would like to find out whether there actually is a difference to our patients if we choose reusable or disposable drapes.

Who is funding this study?

This study has been funded by a PetSavers grant from the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA).

The study has received ethical approval from the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Ethics Review Panel.

What will happen to my pet if I participate?

If you choose to take part in the study, your pet will have their surgery almost exactly as they otherwise would. However, instead of the veterinary team choosing their drape type, your pet will be randomly assigned to either a cloth or reusable drape. This, along with some other details (such as your pet's age and breed, and surgical time) will be recorded in a secure database. All the other care will be as normal.

When your pet has their post-operative check(s), details of how they are doing, any complications or extra treatments needed will also be recorded as usual. All of this information will be stored securely and analysed by the research team here at VetPartners. None of yours or your pet's details will be passed on to anyone else, or used for any other purpose.

We do not expect there to be any increased risk of complications for patients participating in this study. However to make sure, we will review our data every three months or every 500 animals to make sure outcomes are not different to what would normally be expected.

At the end of the study, the results will be collated and shared as a peer-reviewed publication, and also on our website and in other resources, to help ensure vets and nurses can make the best, most informed choice of surgical drapes in the future.

What happens if I don't want to take part?

That's fine! If you don't want to take part it will not affect any of your pets' care, and you don't have to give us a reason. If you do take part and change your mind later, we can withdraw your pet from the study, right up until your information is anonymised (after that point we won't be able to identify you to withdraw you).

To withdraw from the study you can inform us using the email address below.

I would like more information

If you have more questions about the study, or would like to request a summary of the results, please email the study team at Clinical.Board@vetpartners.co.uk, with 'DRAPES' in the subject line.