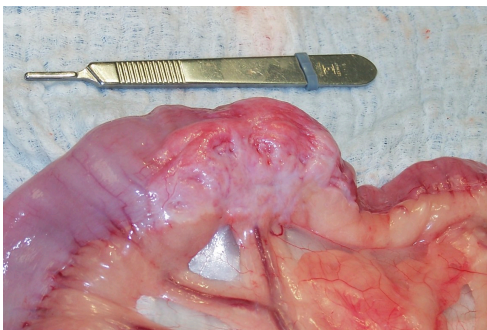


# Abdominal Exploratory Laparotomy / Celiotomy

An exploratory laparotomy is a commonly performed procedure. It can be performed for diagnostic reasons (collecting biopsy specimens) or therapeutic reasons (tumor removal, intestinal foreign body removal, etc.). The decision to pursue an exploratory laparotomy is made after assessing the information gained from the physical examination, palpation of the abdomen, laboratory values, radiographs, and/or ultrasound of the abdomen. Most animals are withheld food for 12 hours prior to anesthesia. Usually water is allowed to prevent overheating or dehydration in our hot humid weather.

When performing an exploratory laparotomy, a thorough exploration of the abdomen is performed to assess all of the organs. This is one of the surgeries where the experience and advanced surgical skills of a Board Certified Surgeon can make a significant difference in the outcome.

After this type of surgery, it is important to restrict your pet's activity to allow the muscle layers of the abdomen to heal properly. Most patients are sent home with pain medication and antibiotics. Depending on the type of surgery your pet had, there may be some dietary restrictions. Signs of potential complications include but are not limited to severe lethargy, listlessness, anorexia, collapse, repeated vomiting, and swelling or discharge from the incision. If you notice any of these signs after your pet has an exploratory laparotomy, please contact us or regular veterinarian as soon as possible.



Above: Intestinal tumor causing an intestinal obstruction (left) that was treated with a resection and anastomosis (right)

Below: Liver tumor found on exploratory laparotomy (left), Stapling equipment used to remove the affected liver lobe (right).

