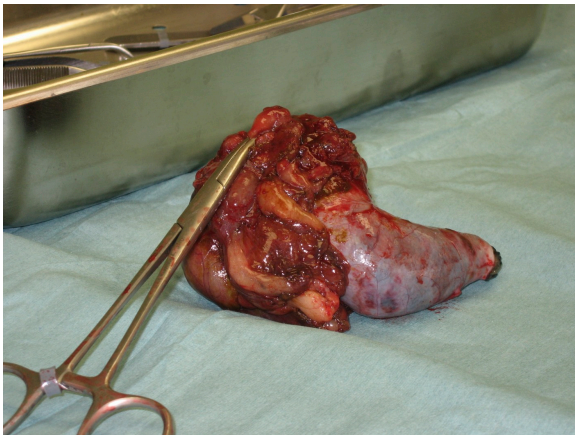


Cholecystectomy (gall bladder removal)

The gallbladder is responsible for storage of bile and sits between two lobes of the liver. The common bile duct transports bile from the gallbladder to an opening in the duodenum (upper small intestine) where the bile is released. The gallbladder can be affected by many disease processes that may necessitate its removal. Diagnosing gall bladder disease generally requires an abdominal ultrasound, which is interpreted in conjunction with physical examination findings and laboratory tests.

Some common conditions that result in cholecystectomy are a gallbladder mucocele, trauma, necrotizing cholecystitis, or neoplasia (cancer). Bile peritonitis occurs when bile leaks from the gallbladder or bile duct into the abdominal cavity. Bile peritonitis can cause severe illness and needs to be corrected as soon as the patient is stable to undergo an exploratory laparotomy.

An exploratory laparotomy is required to perform a cholecystectomy. The gallbladder is released from its attachments to the liver and removed. The bile ducts that are draining the different liver lobes are preserved allowing bile to flow into the duodenum. Animals can live without a gallbladder. The prognosis varies depending on the reason for needing a cholecystectomy.



Diseased gall bladder after surgical removal.