

**VETERINARY VOICE:  
Tips of the Trade**

<b>Surgery – Prophylactic Laparoscopic-Assisted Gastropexy</b>	
<b>What is Prophylactic Laparoscopic-Assisted Gastropexy?</b>	VSCT now offers a minimally invasive procedure to prevent the occurrence of acute life threatening gastric dilatation and volvulus syndrome in large breed dogs.
<b>How does it work?</b>	A gastropexy procedure creates a permanent adhesion by suturing the gastric wall to the abdominal wall, with the stomach in the normal position so that gastric torsion cannot occur in the future. Prophylactic laparoscopic-assisted gastropexy is essentially the same procedure performed through minimally invasive scopes using two small abdominal incisions, without the need for a large open abdominal approach as a preventative procedure.
<b>What is the benefit?</b>	This minimally invasive procedure can be done prophylactically in higher risk breeds when the patient is healthy for a routine anesthesia. Recovery time and pain management are minimized when compared to a standard laparotomy. It can prevent acute life threatening gastric torsion which necessitates emergency surgery and often warrants a guarded prognosis depending on viability of the gastric wall and spleen.
<b>What is the procedure?</b>	Using two small incisions, one for the camera and one for the laparoscopic instrumentation, the surgeon can visualize the stomach. Once the stomach is visualized and the appropriate area for gastropexy adjacent to the pylorus is determined, an atraumatic laparoscopic forceps is used to retrieve the stomach and bring it to the abdominal wall. Once the stomach has been brought to the abdominal wall an incision is made through the skin and abdominal wall. A small portion of the stomach is exteriorized so that a permanent incisional gastropexy can be performed.
<b>Important note:</b>	Not all patients are candidates for laparoscopy. The surgeons at VSCT will assess each patient and determine if laparoscopy will be the best procedure for them.
<b>What is the future of Laparoscopy?</b>	As we follow in the footsteps of human surgery and medicine there are continuous advances in minimally invasive surgery for our veterinary patients. Currently VSCT offers laparoscopic organ biopsy in addition to the prophylactic gastropexy. In the future, laparoscopic assisted cystotomy and thoroscopic pericardial windows will be performed.
<b>Questions?</b> <b>Surgical Experts:</b> <b>Jim Boulay, DVM, MS DACVS</b> <b>Barb Gores, DVM, DACVS</b> <b>Sharon Shields, DVM, DACVS</b>	The Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson has board-certified surgeons available for questions and consultations on surgical conditions during the weekdays. A member of the surgery team is on-call 24/7 to provide consultations to VSCT emergency doctors and to perform emergency surgery for patients seen by the VSCT emergency service. Board-certified surgeons have four additional years of training are certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons to assure competency in advanced veterinary surgery.



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