Animal Dermatology Specialist

Client Information Sheet:
CO_2 Laser Surgery

This resource has been developed for **our clients who are preparing for their pet's CO_2 laser surgery**.

A gentle and precise surgical option for treating skin, ear and paw conditions.

What Is a CO_2 Laser?

A **CO_2 laser is a specialised surgical tool** that uses a **focused infrared beam of light** instead of a scalpel or surgical scissors. The laser energy is absorbed by water in the patient's cells, gently vaporising only the targeted cells while preserving the surrounding tissue so it can heal more efficiently.

The laser can be used to make **precise incisions**, similar to traditional surgery, or to remove abnormal or unhealthy tissue from the surface of the skin. Because the beam is so precise, delicate work can often be performed with less trauma than conventional surgery.

What Conditions Can Be Treated?

A wide range of conditions may benefit from CO_2 laser treatment. Our clinicians will assess the type, depth and location of the lesion to determine whether laser surgery is the safest and most effective option for your pet. Conditions that can be treated include:

- **Skin lumps** and selected superficial tumours such as warts, sebaceous adenomas, small cysts and other surface growths.
- **Skin lesions** including areas of thickened skin, chronic irritation or changes related to sun damage.
- **Paw lesions** such as interdigital lesions, swellings or furunculosis that may not have responded to medical therapy.
- **Ear lesions** such as polyps and small growths where targeted removal can improve comfort and airflow.

In some cases, CO_2 laser therapy can be used in delicate areas, including the face, lips or eyelids, where precision and minimal bleeding are especially important.

© Animal Dermatology Specialist Pty Ltd (ADS). All Rights Reserved.
This resource is for the use of ADS clients and may not be copied or shared by others.

Animal Dermatology Specialist

Key Benefits and Considerations

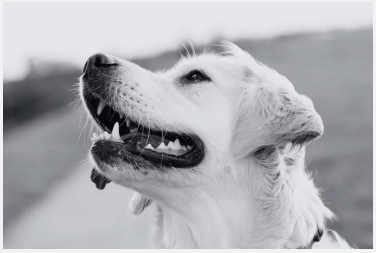
Benefits	Considerations
CO_2 laser surgery can offer several benefits for patient comfort and recovery: • Blood vessels are sealed instantly during treatment, resulting in **minimal bleeding and, in many cases, fewer or no external stitches**. • Nerve endings and lymphatic vessels are sealed as the laser works, leading to reduced pain, less swelling and a smoother recovery. • The laser reduces bacterial contamination within the treatment field, which may lower the risk of **post-operative infection**. These advantages often mean **shorter anaesthetic times**, the ability to treat delicate or hard-to-access areas more safely, and a faster recovery for your pet.	All procedures carry some risk, although complications with CO_2 laser surgery are uncommon: • The most common **post-operative observations** include **mild swelling or oozing**, **temporary scabbing or crusting**, and a faint **'burnt hair' smell** as the area heals. • A laser procedure requires **general anaesthesia** to ensure your pet's safety and comfort. Your veterinarian may recommend **pre-anaesthetic blood testing** so the anaesthetic plan can be tailored specifically for your pet. • Because the laser vaporises targeted tissue, it may not always be possible to submit a sample for **histopathology** to confirm the underlying diagnosis. Your clinician will discuss this with you if relevant and outline any **alternative approaches to diagnosis or monitoring**.

© Animal Dermatology Specialist Pty Ltd (ADS). All Rights Reserved.
This resource is for the use of ADS clients and may not be copied or shared by others.

Animal Dermatology Specialist

What Can I Expect for My Pet's CO_2 Laser Procedure?

Pre-visit



Fasting – your pet will need to have food withheld prior to their anaesthetic. This usually means no breakfast on the morning of the procedure (water can be made available).

Pre-visit anti-anxiety treatment – some pets find vet visits very stressful! If your pet may benefit from some help for this, please let your vet know before the day.

Procedure

Admission time – having a set admit time allows our team to have everything ready for you and gives us the opportunity to answer any questions you might have.

Procedure time – your pet will undergo a general anaesthetic and have their laser procedure performed. They will then recover under careful supervision in hospital.

Discharge time – most pets go home the same afternoon as their procedure. We will arrange a discharge time once your pet is in recovery.

Home Care

Healing – if you can see your pet's treatment site, you may observe some redness and crusting over 1 to 3 weeks, depending on the size of the site.

Medications – your pet may go home with a topical soothing cream and protective bandage or Elizabethan collar. Some cases will have take-home pain relief.

Care instructions – keep the skin clean and dry, prevent your pet scratching or rubbing the treatment site, and monitor for any bleeding or signs of pain.

Still have questions?

We are here to help.

Please contact our team if you'd like additional guidance or further information.

W: animalderm.com.au **E: team@animalderm.com.au** **P: 0402 ADS ADS (0402 237 237)**

© Animal Dermatology Specialist Pty Ltd (ADS). All Rights Reserved.
This resource is for the use of ADS clients and may not be copied or shared by others.