Preface

Perioperative Monitoring

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Editor

This issue of the Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice is dedicated to monitoring of the surgical patient: preoperatively, intraoperatively, and postoperatively. To maximize outcome in these patients, appropriate monitoring and care must be available. Even the most skilled surgeon would not have positive outcomes unless this essential care is provided.

Ideally, perioperative patients will have a highly skilled group of veterinarians caring for them. Throughout this issue, articles have been written by specialists in the fields of emergency and critical care, anesthesia, surgery, internal medicine, cardiology, veterinary nursing, and nutrition. This demonstrates the diverse knowledge from different areas of veterinary medicine that can be required for the treatment of the perioperative patient. Although such a team is not necessarily required for every patient, knowledge about all of these areas is essential for many, and this issue provides a valuable resource for the veterinarian that is working without such a team.

Management of the patient’s volume status with fluid therapy, understanding the impacts of anemia and oxygen delivery, monitoring the respiratory system for appropriate oxygenation and ventilation, and the use of blood gases to monitor and treat acid-base and electrolyte disturbances are of paramount importance in these patients. Equally important are monitoring the cardiovascular system for abnormalities in blood pressure and heart rhythm, understanding the importance of thermoregulation and coagulation and their effects on the perioperative patient, knowing how to provide appropriate analgesia and nursing care, as well as optimizing wound healing, and providing appropriate nutrition for these patients. This issue focuses on these many aspects of care, with an article on each of these topics.

I would like to thank all of the authors that contributed to this issue of Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice for taking the time out of their busy clinic and teaching schedules. Together they have provided an excellent resource that will be used by veterinarians as they try to optimize the treatment of their surgical...
patients. This information can improve the care of dogs and cats undergoing surgery. It provides a nice, concise summary of many of the aspects of perioperative monitoring that are utilized in the Emergency Service, Anesthesia, and Intensive Care Unit at the University of Pennsylvania Small Animal Hospital where I help care for many of the postoperative patients.

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