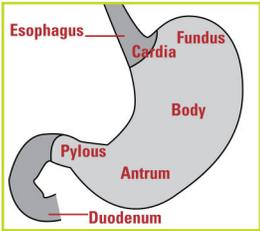


## Veterinary Endoscopy



Endoscopy is a procedure that is performed in order to view the inside of the body without performing surgery. Endoscopy was developed during the 1800's and is widely used in both human and veterinary

medicine. In simple terms, the endoscope is a tube with a camera and light on the tip. The endoscope itself can either be a rigid or flexible tube. Rigid tubes are used primarily to visualize the colon/rectum (proctoscopy), nasal passages (rhinoscopy), lower urinary tract (cystoscopy), joints (arthroscopy), and inside the abdomen / chest (laparoscopy/thoracoscopy). Flexible tubes can be used to visualize the intestinal tract (upper and lower) or airways (bronchoscopy). In some situations, both a flexible and rigid scope may be used (rhinoscopy).

The gastro intestinal tract begins at the level of the upper esophageal sphincter, continues through the esophagus, stomach, small intestine and large intestine. Endoscopy is indicated for many problems encountered in veterinary medicine. It allows for internal visualization of an area of the body, and can be used for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. Once an area is visualized, samples may be taken for biopsy or foreign objects may be removed. For example, examination of the esophagus may be recommended when a patient has persistent regurgitation in order to evaluate for possible stricture (narrowing of the esophagus), cancer, inflammation (esophagitis) or even to remove foreign objects lodged in the esophagus (bones, hairballs, rawhides, etc...). Biopsies may be taken using specialized instruments inserted through a channel in the endoscope. This allows some diagnoses to be made with lower cost, risk and patient discomfort compared to surgery.

Endoscopy of the stomach and small intestine is indicated when a patient has vomiting, diarrhea and/or lack of appetite caused by a primary gastrointestinal problem. Common problems encountered include foreign objects in the stomach, gastritis (inflammation of the stomach), inflammatory bowel disease, and less often, cancer. Rhinoscopy is recommended when the patient experiences nasal discharge, nasal bleeding, and/or sneezing/snorting and the veterinarian is concerned about inflammatory/allergic diseases, polyps, foreign objects or cancer.

Endoscopy is recommended after other diagnostic tests have been performed. Your veterinarian may recommend this procedure after thorough clinical examination has been performed (including history and physical examination, and radiographic and laboratory evaluation). In veterinary medicine, endoscopy requires general anesthesia, and the length of the procedure will vary depending upon the problem. For examination of the intestinal tract, fasting may be required for 24-48 hours. Most patients will go home the day of the procedure and will not experience pain or discomfort following the procedure. Complications of endoscopy itself are rare and are discussed during consultation with the specialist. At Santa Cruz Veterinary Hospital, we offer endoscopy of the upper and lower intestinal tract, bronchoscopy and arthroscopy. Appointments for consultation can be made by contacting our referral coordinator at 831.475.5400.

