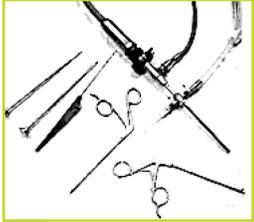


# Veterinary Arthroscopy



## INTRODUCTION

Arthroscopy is a minimally invasive surgical procedure in which the surgeon may visualize, diagnose and treat problems inside a joint. Small instruments containing a lens and a lighting system are inserted

through small skin incisions to allow access and visualization of structures inside the joint. A video camera attached to the arthroscope displays the magnified image of the joint on a video monitor.

Applications of arthroscopy in veterinary orthopedics: Although the inside of nearly all joints can be viewed with an arthroscope, three joints are most frequently examined with this instrument. These include the knee, shoulder and elbow. Some of the most frequent conditions amenable to arthroscopic examination and treatment in dogs are:

- Loose fragments of bone and cartilage: OCD - Osteochondrosis / Osteochondritis Dissecans of the knee, shoulder, elbow
- Inflammation: Synovitis - inflamed joint lining (synovium)
- Injuries and hereditary conditions:

**Shoulder** - OCD, inflammation or tears of the bicipital tendon, rotator cuff injuries

**Elbow** - OCD, UAP and FCP associated with elbow dysplasia

**Knee** - cranial cruciate ligament tears with instability, meniscal tears

## Advantages of arthroscopy:

- Superior visualization due to arthroscopic access and magnification
- Significantly lower pain levels
- Earlier and better post-operative use of the limb



## ARTHROSCOPIC PROCEDURE

The surgery, although much easier in terms of recovery than "open" surgery, still requires the use of anesthetics and the special equipment in a hospital operating room. A small incision is made to insert the arthroscope.

Several other small incisions may be made to see other parts of the joint or insert other instruments. Initially, arthroscopy was simply a diagnostic tool for planning standard "open" surgery, known as "arthrotomy". With development of better instrumentation and surgical techniques, many conditions can now be also treated arthroscopically. The following conditions can be treated arthroscopically or in combination with open surgery.

- Elbow dysplasia: OCD, Coronoid disease, UAP
- Shoulder OCD
- Shoulder injuries
- Tarsus (Hock Joint) OCD
- Cranial cruciate ligament injury in the knee

## POST-OPERATIVE CARE

Many patients need little or no pain medication for arthroscopy. Before being released, you will be given instructions about care for your pet's incisions, what activities to avoid, and which exercises should be done to aid recovery. During follow-up visits, the surgeon will inspect the incisions and discuss the rehabilitation program. Possible complications: Although very uncommon, possible complications include: Infection, excessive swelling or bleeding, damage to blood vessels or nerves, and instrument breakage.