

Ear Cropping Procedure, Potential Risks and Complications

The ear cropping procedure is an elective surgery that is debatably necessary for the dogs health. There are risks of anesthetic complications during the surgery as severe as death. There are also risks for post surgical complications such as post operative excessive bleeding, infection, and disfigurement due to abnormal healing. The aftercare is/can be a tremendous burden on the owner as far as requiring thorough cleaning of the ears several times daily following the surgery for the first 2 weeks. There are also 4-12 weeks of a posting procedure to be done by the owner after the ears are healed.

To minimize complications, the crop should be done around 6-8 weeks of age in most cases. The older the puppy is, the more difficult the aftercare is because the puppy is stronger to fight being restrained for the appropriate daily aftercare. The puppy is also more active the older they are, and are less apt to lay around and rest while they're healing. They become stronger which allows them to violently shake their head in response to the odd feeling and itching sensation during healing which can lead to excessive swelling and delayed healing. They are also more coordinated to use their feet to tear bandaging off, and to damage their incisions. For these reasons, I highly recommend to clients who haven't yet purchased a puppy to find one the breeder has already had the ears done on to avoid these potential troubles. With this all being said, complications are extremely rare.