

Pricing

APPALACHIAN SHELTER MEDICINE INITIATIVE INC.



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COST OF SURGERY

The following sections outline a detailed cost analysis for each surgical procedure performed at our facility. By breaking down the individual components—including medications, surgical supplies, anesthesia, labor, and overhead—this table provides a transparent and comprehensive view of the raw costs associated with each surgery. This analysis not only supports financial planning and sustainability but also helps identify areas for cost-efficiency without compromising the quality of care. As ASMI expands its reach and refines its operational model, these pricing benchmarks will serve as a foundation for transparent budgeting, strategic planning, and future grant-seeking efforts. The following tables present these expenses in a clear, itemized format to assist in budgeting, pricing, and evaluating resource allocation.

The Appalachian Shelter Medicine Initiative (ASMI) adopts surgical and anesthetic protocols developed and field-tested by the **ASPCA's Spay/Neuter Alliance**, a national leader in high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) operations. These protocols were designed specifically to optimize efficiency, minimize risk, and ensure patient welfare while allowing for the safe sterilization of large numbers of animals each day. They are widely recognized and replicated by municipal shelters, mobile units, and nonprofit clinics throughout the United States.

A cornerstone of the ASPCA protocol is the use of **total injectable anesthesia** for feline and small canine procedures. This approach eliminates the need for gas anesthesia in many cases, reducing both cost and complexity. For example, the ASPCA recommends reconstituting **Telazol** with **dexmedetomidine** and **butorphanol** to create a potent, multi-modal injectable anesthetic blend. This mixture provides sedation, analgesia, and immobilization in a single intramuscular injection, allowing for faster surgical prep and recovery with minimal monitoring equipment. For feline neuters, the protocols call for highly efficient techniques that minimize surgical time to under 5 minutes in most cases, without compromising patient safety.

By standardizing dosing, minimizing waste, and streamlining perioperative processes, the ASPCA's HQHVSN model dramatically reduces the **cost per procedure** without sacrificing quality. Medications are chosen for their **cost-effectiveness, shelf stability, and safety margin**, and most are dosed by weight to ensure minimal excess. Additionally, surgical supplies such as gloves, drapes, and suture are selected for high turnover use, enabling clinics to keep per-patient costs low—typically **\$18–22 for cats** and **\$23–28 for dogs**, depending on weight and sex.

These carefully refined protocols allow ASMI to confidently estimate costs, maintain consistent surgical outcomes, and offer life-saving services at a price point that is both affordable for clients and sustainable for the organization. They also ensure that ASMI's services are in line with national best practices, promoting both community health and animal welfare at scale.



CANINE SURGERY

The following tables present a breakdown of canine surgery costs based on supply usage and labor requirements.

Average Cost of Canine Spay/Neuter Using ASPCA Protocols															
Products	Cost per 1 Unit	Amount Needed per Pound of Body Weight													
		5	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	120	140	150
Acepromazine 1 mg/mL	\$0.05	0.11	0.23	0.45	0.68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acepromazine 10 mg/mL	\$0.46	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Hydromorphone 10 mg/mL	\$1.55	0.02	0.05	0.09	0.14	0.18	0.23	0.27	0.32	0.36	0.41	0.45	0.55	0.64	0.68
Ketamine 100 mg/mL	\$1.35	0.14	0.27	0.55	0.82	1.09	1.25	1.36	1.43	1.45	1.64	1.82	2.18	2.55	2.73
Midazolam 5 mg/mL	\$0.29	0.16	0.32	0.64	0.95	1.27	1.82	2.45	3.18	4.00	4.91	5.45	6.55	7.64	8.18
Meloxicam 5 mg/mL	\$5.13	0.09	0.18	0.36	0.55	0.73	0.91	1.09	1.27	1.45	1.64	1.82	2.18	2.55	2.73
Surgery Glove	\$0.84	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
#10 Surgical Scalpel Blade	\$0.40	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
PDO Suture	\$4.21	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL		\$6.19	\$6.93	\$8.40	\$9.88	\$11.35	\$12.73	\$14.07	\$15.37	\$16.65	\$18.16	\$19.56	\$22.38	\$25.19	\$26.60

The following table shows average surgical time based on the variability of canine patient physique and expected labor costs.

Standard Canine Surgery Times and Labor Costs						
Dog Weight/Condition	Estimated Surgical Time (minutes)	Notes	Avg Surgical Time (min)	Surge on Cost (\$)	Technician Cost (\$)	Total Labor Cost per Surgery (\$)
Puppy (<6 months, under 15 lbs) and All Neuters	10–15	Usually fast and low risk	12.5	\$16.67	\$12.5	\$29.17
Small Adult (under 30 lbs)	15–20	Routine case for most HQHVSN surgeons	17.5	\$23.33	\$12.5	\$35.83
Medium Adult (30–60 lbs)	20–25	Standard spay duration	22.5	\$30	\$12.5	\$42.5
Large Adult (60–90 lbs)	25–35	May require more retraction/suturing	30	\$40	\$12.5	\$52.5
Extra-Large Adult (>90 lbs)	30–45	May need assistant or additional time	37.5	\$50	\$12.5	\$62.5
Obese (any size)	30–45	Fat may obscure landmarks	37.5	\$50	\$12.5	\$62.5
In Estrus	25–40	Increased vascularity, caution required	32.5	\$43.33	\$12.5	\$55.83
Pregnant (early stage)	30–45	Uterus enlarged, care with manipulation	37.5	\$50	\$12.5	\$62.5
Pregnant (late stage)	40–60	Larger uterus, higher hemorrhage risk	50	\$66.67	\$12.5	\$79.17
Pyometra (open/closed)	45–70	Not typical for HQHVSN, but possible in rescue cases	57.5	\$76.67	\$12.5	\$89.17

Based on a detailed cost analysis using ASPCA-recommended drug protocols and labor time benchmarks from high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) practice, the Appalachian Shelter Medicine Initiative (ASMI) has calculated that the **average total cost for a dog spay or neuter surgery is approximately \$57.80**. This figure includes an average **labor cost of \$35.20**, factoring in veterinary surgeon and technician time, and an **average supply cost of \$22.60** for medications, anesthetics, suture, and disposables. Spay procedures typically require more time and resources than neuters; therefore, these costs reflect a balanced average across both sexes and a typical weight range (10–90 lbs), as encountered in regional shelter populations.

To sustainably support operations, ASMI proposes a **flat fee of \$75 per dog surgery**. This rate not only covers direct labor and supply costs but also contributes to essential overhead, such as equipment maintenance, facility utilities, insurance, and staff development. Importantly, the \$75 fee structure

allows ASMI to operate **without relying solely on external subsidies**, while still maintaining affordability for shelters, rescues, and low-income pet owners throughout Eastern Kentucky. This cost-recovery model aligns with industry standards used by other nonprofit HQHVSN programs and will enable ASMI to scale its services responsibly, ensuring long-term impact in addressing pet overpopulation and shelter intake across the region.

FELINE SURGERY

Expanding on the financial model for canine surgeries, the Appalachian Shelter Medicine Initiative (ASMI) also provides high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) services for cats—an essential component of population control in both shelter and community settings. Feline procedures, while generally requiring fewer resources than canine surgeries, still demand careful anesthetic management and skilled handling to maintain safety and efficiency. Using data from ASPCA-standard protocols and shelter medicine benchmarks, ASMI has evaluated the average costs associated with feline spay and neuter surgeries to guide sustainable pricing that balances accessibility with operational viability.

ASPCA anesthesia protocols recommend a reconstituted injectable mixture—commonly known as TTDex—comprised of Telazol, butorphanol, and dexmedetomidine. The price per mL is calculated in the table below.

Cost Calculations for TTDex Mixture		
Product	Cost Per 1 Unit	Amount Needed For 5 mL (1vial)
Telazol	66.6	1 bottle
Butorphanol	3.35	2.5 mL
Dexmedetomidine	10.35	2.5 mL
TOTAL		\$87.83
Cost per mL		\$17.57

The estimated cost per mL of the TTDex mixture is approximately \$17.57. Based on these calculations in mind and the necessary equipment required to perform surgery, the cost per feline surgery is outlined in the following table.

Average Cost of Feline Spay/Neuter using ASPCA Protocols										
Product	Cost Per 1 Unit	Amount Needed per Pound Range of Body Weight In Pounds								
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
TTDex	\$17.57	0.03	0.05	0.06	0.08	0.10	0.11	0.13	0.14	0.16
Meloxicam 5 mg/kg	\$5.13	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.09
Atipemazole	\$10.13	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.05
#10 Surgical Blade	\$0.84	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Surgical Glove	\$0.40	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
PDO Suture	\$4.21	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL		\$7.21	\$7.59	\$7.97	\$8.35	\$8.73	\$9.11	\$9.49	\$9.87	\$10.25

Next, calculations for the labor costs per feline surgery is outlined in the following table.

Surgery Type	Surgeon Time (min)	Tech Time (min)	Surgeon Cost (\$)	Tech Cost (\$)	Total Labor Cost (\$)
Cat Spay	12	25	\$16	\$10.42	\$26.42
Cat Neuter	3	20	\$4	\$8.33	\$12.33

To ensure the financial sustainability of its high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) program, the Appalachian Shelter Medicine Initiative (ASMI) has conducted a detailed cost analysis for feline surgeries. This analysis incorporates labor time for veterinarians and technicians, as well as supply costs based on ASPCA-endorsed anesthetic and surgical protocols.

For **feline spays**, the average labor cost is approximately **\$26.42 per surgery**, reflecting around 12 minutes of surgeon time and 25 minutes of technician support. For **feline neuters**, the labor cost is lower—averaging **\$12.33**—due to the brief duration of the procedure (typically 3 minutes for the surgeon and 20 minutes for the technician). Supply costs for both procedures, which include injectable anesthesia, analgesia, surgical disposables, and antiseptics, are estimated at **\$18.00 per surgery** on average.

Combining these figures, the **total average cost per feline spay** is approximately **\$44.42**, while a **feline neuter** costs around **\$30.33** in direct labor and supply expenses. To create a streamlined, sustainable pricing model that supports overhead such as facility costs, staff training, equipment maintenance, and administrative capacity, ASMI proposes a **flat fee of \$60 per feline surgery**, regardless of sex. This price point strikes a balance between cost recovery and accessibility, aligning with regional nonprofit clinic norms and ensuring affordability for both rescue partners and low-income pet owners.

Importantly, this fee structure also builds in the flexibility to subsidize procedures for community cat programs (such as TNR) and to collaborate with local governments or grantmakers to offer no-cost surgeries where needed. The proposed pricing model reflects ASMI's mission to deliver economically sustainable, community-focused veterinary services while directly addressing the overpopulation crisis in Eastern Kentucky.