



BASICS OF SURGERY IN BIRDS

Surgery is a common procedure in avian medicine. The same general principles apply to birds as to mammals. However, the avian body differs greatly from the mammalian body. Birds don't have a diaphragm (so there are no separated thoracic and abdominal cavities), have feathers instead of hairs, have a total different respiratory system and tend to cool down quickly. Because of the anatomical and physiological properties, the avian body needs a different approach during the preparation phase before surgery, surgery itself and the recovery phase to prevent complications during surgery (circulatory problems, respiratory problems, hypothermia, e.g.) and in the post-operative period.

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The sternum is very big in most birds, covering the biggest part of the ventral body wall. For selected procedures endoscopic surgery is an option, but for most cases of surgery in the coelomic cavity a bigger coeliotomy is necessary. To expose the different organs, different entry-sites need to be used.

Optical magnification, fine instrumentation, thin suture material and bipolar coagulator are frequently necessary in surgery of birds.

Besides orthopedic and trauma surgery, procedures on the gastrointestinal tract and reproductive tract are most common.