**Abdominal Exploratory Laparotomy**  
An abdominal exploratory is a surgical procedure involving the opening of the abdominal cavity and examination of the abdominal organs.

**Indications:**

An abdominal exploratory is indicated whenever there is significant abdominal disease that eludes diagnosis such as

* Chronic Vomiting,
* Penetrating Abdominal Wounds,
* Abdominal Pain,
* Abdominal Fluid Accumulation,
* Urinary Bladder Disease,
* Abdominal Masses And
* Intestinal diseases are some of the more common indications for an abdominal exploratory.

**Pre-Surgical Tests:**

* Preoperative tests depend in part on the age and general health of the animal as well as the reason for the abdominal exploratory.
* Typically, radiographs, blood count, serum biochemical tests, a urinalysis, and possibly an EKG are performed.

**Abdominal Exploratory Time:**

* The procedure takes about one to two hours to perform in most cases, including the needed time for preparation and anesthesia.
* The time will vary depending on any other surgical procedures that are performed.

**Risks and Complications:**

* The overall risk of this surgery is moderate to low, depending on the reason for the procedure.
* The major risks are those of general anesthesia, bleeding (hemorrhage), postoperative infection, intestinal or urinary bladder leakage and wound breakdown (dehiscence) over the incision.
* Overall complication rate is low, but serious complications can result in death or the need for additional surgery.

**Aftercare:**

* Postoperative medication is given to relieve pain, which is judged in most cases to be moderate and can be effectively eliminated with safe and effective pain medicines.
* The home care requires reduced activity until the stitches are removed in 10 to 14 days.
* You should inspect the suture line daily for signs of redness, discharge, swelling, or pain.

**Hospitalization:**

* The hospital stay will vary depending on the reason for the exploratory and any additional surgeries that were performed.
* Hospital stays may vary from 2 to 5 days and release from the hospital will depend on the overall health of the pet.