

What to Expect: Behavior

EVALUATION APPOINTMENT INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

INITIAL APPOINTMENT INFORMATION

Physical or medical problems often contribute to a behavioral problem or can affect a treatment plan. *Please contact your regular veterinarian to schedule a physical exam if your pet has not been examined for this behavior problem in the last three months.*

Routine blood work and possibly other tests like urinalysis and endocrine function are important in assessing your animal's health and will be required before any medications will be prescribed. *Please see your regular veterinarian for these laboratory tests as well.* Lab testing can be performed during the consultation at UTCVM if requested by your veterinarian.

Consultation appointments may last 1 to 3 hours. We appreciate your completing the extensive history before the consultation. It allows us to spend more time on treatment and training during the consultation. Please fill out the appropriate form and return to us 3 days before your appointment. **EMAIL: vmcbehavior@utk.edu FAX: (865)974-3926**

During your appointment, we will discuss motivations and factors contributing to your animal's behavior problem and formulate a treatment plan. Treatments always include reward-based behavior modification, appropriate training or control aids, and changes to your pet's environment (e.g. environmental enrichment or avoiding aggression triggers). Medications may be recommended in some cases.

Although follow-up sessions are never required, they are strongly encouraged for almost every animal. In most instances behavior problems should be considered a chronic condition in need of consistent treatment, and the treatment itself will need to be altered as the pet's behavior and family dynamics change. The number of appointments or training sessions is dependent on the specific problem, animal, and family.

COMMUNICATIONS

We will need to know the optimal way to contact you during the time your pet is in the teaching hospital and for follow-up recommendations. In order to optimize communication pathways, outgoing call numbers are typically blocked, so you will need to be able to be reached at a phone that accepts blocked calls.

FINANCIAL POLICY

The financial policy of the hospital requires full payment for the entire bill when your pet is discharged from the hospital. If your pet stays overnight, you will be required to submit half of the total expected cost as a deposit. We accept major credit cards, Care Credit, cash or check as forms of payments.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Missed appointments are inconvenient to our current and future patients. Please call us (865-974-8387) at least 24 hours in advance if you are unable to make your scheduled appointment. **UTCVM is located in the Eastern Time Zone.**

APPOINTMENT DAY CHECKLIST

Please bring your pet and any family members that are involved in the behavior problem and treatment. We suggest young children not attend consult yet we understand that it is necessary at times. We request at least one adult handler for each dog. There is a common waiting room for all UTCVM Small Animal services. If you feel your dog will be reactive or aggressive to people or pets in this area, please call us (865-974-8387) from your car upon arrival. We will send someone to meet you outside. They will bring you to the behavioral consultation room.

- Bring any motivating items that may be helpful
 - Favorite treats (especially if your pet has a food allergy)
 - Favorite toys
 - Familiar blanket or dog bed
 - Any training tools you currently or previously used (if you still have)
- Bring current medication/supplement bottles or packaging
- Please decrease meals by at least 50% the day of the consultation so your pet is hungry and motivated for training sessions
- Please bring current medical records and/or laboratory results from the last three months

Videos and photographs of your pet and his/her environment can be extremely helpful. If you can safely video your pet exhibiting the problem behavior (e.g. video possible separation anxiety dog when home alone) please do so. Please do not put your pet or people in a dangerous situation just to obtain a video.

****Please note that all pets should be brought to the Veterinary Medical Center on a leash or in a pet carrier.****

Thank you for choosing UTCVM Veterinary Medical Center for your pet's care. We look forward to meeting you!