

What to Expect: Nutrition

EVALUATION APPOINTMENT INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Board Certified Veterinary Nutritionists® at the UTCVM Veterinary Medical Center are board certified by the American College of Veterinary Nutrition (www.acvn.org). This board certification requires members to have completed four years of veterinary training to become a doctor of veterinary medicine, two to three years of additional residency training in veterinary nutrition, and passage of a credentialing process and comprehensive exam. Many veterinary nutritionists, including both of UTCVM's nutritionists, also hold advanced PhD degrees. The veterinary nutrition service is additionally staffed by nutrition residents; veterinarians pursuing their advanced training in veterinary nutrition. We also have a licensed veterinary technician with a Veterinary Technician Specialty in Nutrition (VTS-Nutrition) as a member of our team.

HOW TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

Once your regular veterinarian submits a **UTCVM Nutrition Referral Form**, a member of the scheduling desk will reach out to you to schedule an appointment. In addition, we **REQUIRE** submission of the following documents prior to your scheduled appointment:

If any of these documents have not been received at least one business day prior to your scheduled appointment, your appointment will be canceled.

1. Baseline labwork

- Complete blood count (CBC; within last 6 months)
- Chemistry (within last 6 months)
- Urinalysis (within last 6 months)
- *Please have this information submitted or schedule an appointment with your veterinarian(s) to have these tests performed if not completed within last 6 months.*

2. Diet, Activity, and Household History Form (including Remote Consultation Form).

All forms can be faxed (865-974-0174) or emailed to vetclientservices@utk.edu.

INITIAL APPOINTMENT INFORMATION

The initial appointment, whether it occurs via video conference, over the phone, or in person, will take approximately one hour to complete. During this time, the nutrition service team will review information submitted by your regular veterinarian as well as the Client Diet, Activity, and Household History Form you completed. This helps ensure we have the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding your pet's current condition. Toward the end of the consultation, potential diet options will be discussed and you and the nutrition team will decide the most appropriate approach for your pet. If necessary, you may be given "homework" assignments to complete, such as feeding certain human food items to gauge your pet's willingness to eat them or collecting additional information regarding specific foods, treats and/or supplements being used at home.

REMOTE APPOINTMENTS VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

If you have booked a video conference appointment, you will receive an email with a hyperlink the evening before your appointment. You may use any device that has a speaker and camera capabilities. If you are using a smartphone or tablet, you will need to download the Zoom app prior to the appointment. If you are having difficulty logging in around your appointment time and we are unable to communicate through Zoom, we will call you directly to perform the appointment using the numbers you have listed on the Diet, Activity, and Household History form.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Whether consulting with the nutrition department in person or remotely (phone or video conference), the fee for the consultation, and fees related to any written diet plan to be formulated after the consultation, are due when services are rendered. For remote consultations, UTCVM Client Services will follow up with you directly to collect payment. You may also be provided with information to pay your bill electronically. CareCredit® payments must be arranged prior to your appointment. We **CANNOT** begin working on any written diet plan formulations until payment has been received. We do **NOT** charge veterinary clinics.

Please note that while we strive to answer all your questions, initial appointments are booked for one hour and follow-up appointments are booked for 30 minutes. Appointments that continue beyond this scheduled time may incur extended consultation fees.

COMMUNICATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Once we have received payment for the consultation and diet plan fees, we will provide a written copy of the comprehensive diet plan within 10 business days. You will receive this diet plan via the email provided on your Diet, Activity, and Household History Form and the veterinary clinic that submitted the referral will receive a copy via fax, or via email if requested.

Please note that the diet plan release may be delayed while we wait to hear back regarding the results of any "homework" assignments (e.g., feeding certain human food items to gauge your pet's willingness to eat them, collecting additional information regarding specific foods, treats and/or supplements being used at home, or the results of additional requested labwork).

ADDITIONAL FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

The cost for additional follow-up appointments is \$74 if completed within one year of your initial consultation. If necessary, additional reformulation fees to address your pet's continued needs and any additional requests will be discussed during the recheck appointment. The fee for any follow-up appointments, and any additional fees discussed during that appointment, are due when services are rendered.

Have your regular veterinarian forward the following results to the Nutrition Service **BEFORE** your appointment:

- Body weight, body condition score, muscle condition assessment
- Required diagnostics listed on the last page of your pet's diet plan
- Other developments pertinent to your pet's medical condition

CANCELLATION POLICY

Missed appointments are inconvenient to our current and future patients. Please call us at least 24 hours in advance if you are unable to make your scheduled appointment. If we need to cancel your appointment due to missing mandatory documents, you will receive a phone call by 9:30am the morning of your scheduled appointment. UTCVM is located in the Eastern Time Zone and our regular business hours are 9:00am - 5:00pm, Monday - Friday.

DIET PLAN COST ESTIMATES

Commercial Diet Plans

All appointments with the nutrition service start with a nutrition consultation fee of \$89. Following the initial consultation, if a commercial diet plan is appropriate for your pet, a written commercial diet plan fee of \$105 will also apply. **The total charge will be \$194 and this option provides you with the following:**

- Comprehensive written diet plan with our recommendations for your pet

New Homemade Diet Plans

All appointments with the nutrition service start with a nutrition consultation fee of \$89. Following the initial consultation, if a homemade diet plan is appropriate for your pet, a written homemade diet plan fee of \$263 will also apply. **The total charge will be \$352 and this option provides you with the following:**

- Comprehensive written diet plan with our recommendations for your pet
 - » Includes 1 custom homemade recipe to meet your pet's specific needs

Please note that if you request additional diet options, to create variation for your pet, each additional diet is \$63+.

If requesting diets for multiple pets, each additional pet must have completed pre-appointment information. Fees for additional pets are based on health status and requested ingredient variety.

Homemade Diet Plan Reformulations

This option is only available if you have previously completed a NEW homemade diet consultation. Below are the estimated fees associated with potential modifications.

- Recheck appointment with the veterinary nutritionist/resident - \$74
- Recheck appointment with the veterinary technician - \$41
- Supplement change (e.g., changing from Balance IT® to human supplements) - \$63
- Calorie change (e.g., increasing or decreasing the calories using the same ingredients) - \$63
- Requesting additional diet for variety (no new or progressed disease) - \$95
- Reformulation of current ingredients due to current disease progression - \$126
- Completely new disease diagnosis (these cases are treated like NEW diets - \$263

Please note that the reformulation fee for the patient's needs and any additional requests will be discussed during the recheck appointment and may vary from the examples listed above.

Weight Loss Plans

All appointments with the nutrition service start with a nutrition consultation fee of \$89. Following the initial consultation, if a weight loss plan is appropriate for your pet, a written commercial diet weight loss plan (\$105) OR a homemade diet weight loss plan (\$263) fee will also apply. **The total charge will be \$194 or \$352 and this option provides you with the following:**

- Comprehensive written weight loss plan with our recommendations for your pet using either appropriate commercial diets OR 1 custom homemade diet

Monthly weight rechecks via email or in-person are recommended for the duration of a weight loss plan and can be scheduled with the veterinary nutritionist/resident (\$74) or the veterinary technician (\$41).

Please note that homemade diet plans used for weight loss often need to be reformulated multiple times during the course of an active weight loss plan and may incur multiple diet reformulation fees.

Inpatient Weight Loss Treatment

If you are struggling with a weight loss plan, let us get your pet started. This two week program combines underwater treadmill exercise with proper nutrition to jump start a successful weight loss program. This program is for pets free from major medical conditions only.

For \$1,100-\$1,250, patients stay at UTCVM for two weeks and receive the following:

- Evaluation by a nutritionist and canine rehabilitation specialist
- Twice daily underwater treadmill exercise
- Additional aerobic conditioning based on ability
- Boarding and weight loss diets included

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