



What to Expect: Internal Medicine

EVALUATION APPOINTMENT INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Internal Medicine Service is staffed by a rotating group of faculty, residents, interns, veterinary nurses and veterinary students. During your visit you will meet at least one student and clinician, but “behind the scenes” a team of 6-8 individuals will be involved with your pet’s care.

The initial consultation in the examination room will last 1 to 1.5 hours in order to review your pet’s medical history, examine your pet, and have teaching discussions with students. Most pets stay at least for the duration of the clinic day for additional tests or consultations with other clinicians. **Not all diagnostic tests or treatments may be available the day of your pet’s appointment.**

Diagnostic imaging and medical procedures are typically scheduled for the following day, so you should anticipate the need for your pet to stay overnight or return the following morning. Procedures requiring anesthesia are scheduled through the anesthesiology service and require recent blood work and an examination by the anesthesiologist, therefore the pet must be in the hospital early the morning of anesthesia. Procedures requiring general anesthesia are not done the same day as the initial evaluation.

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. For hospitalized patients, we will call you at least once daily to update you on your pet’s condition. Your clinician or student will arrange the best time of day for this contact.

Please be assured that we will contact you when there are major changes in your pet’s condition. If you need to contact us, please ask for your primary clinician, technician or student by name and be prepared to leave a callback number. Other hospital personnel will NOT be able to give you information about your pet, especially after hours.

A summary of our evaluation will be provided to your referring veterinarian, in the form of a telephone call and/or letter. In most instances, your veterinarian will also receive a copy of the instructions given to you at the time your pet is discharged. It is your responsibility to ensure that we have the appropriate referral information at the time of your initial visit and that you advise us if you wish the information to be handled differently.

FEES

Your veterinarian may be able to provide a rough cost estimate for the visit based on the general nature of your pet’s problems. A more specific estimate of the cost of evaluation will be given to you during your first visit. Adjustments to this estimate will be given to you if changes develop or are anticipated during your pet’s evaluation or treatment.

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.

AGGRESSIVE ANIMALS

Aggressive animals needing medical or surgical care may be seen on a case-by-case basis and only with approval of the clinician in charge. Because appointments with aggressive animals must be coordinated with our Behavior Service, consultation with the service chief and your veterinarian is required. An additional professional fee will be applied for animals requiring assistance from the Behavior Service.

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.**

INTERNAL MEDICINE PRE-APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST

- Please have your primary veterinarian forward vaccination history to UTCVM **prior** to your appointment. Vaccinations must be up to date prior to the appointment unless there is a specific medical reason that your pet cannot be vaccinated.
- Please **DO NOT** feed your pet after midnight the night before the appointment unless otherwise indicated by your veterinarian (e.g., pets with low blood sugar). Water can be given up to the time of appointment.
- If your pet is diabetic, feed and administer insulin **as usual**.
- Give the morning medication as usual.
- Bring all medications that your pet is currently taking to your appointment. These should be in their original prescription containers.
- We usually need to examine a urine sample collected directly from the urinary bladder during a medical evaluation. **PLEASE TRY NOT TO LET YOUR PET URINATE ON THE WAY INTO THE HOSPITAL.**
- Visitation of hospitalized pets is encouraged and can be arranged with your clinician. The time and duration of visits will be restricted for pets in the intensive care unit (ICU). Please do not hesitate to request a copy of the visitation policy for ICU if such a stay is required for your pet.
- It is important that you meet the service clinicians during your first appointment time. Drop-offs might be approved under certain circumstances for subsequent visits. In such cases, you will not see a doctor or student at the time of the drop off. Drop-offs are not allowed between 9 am and 11 am because of the number of client appointments scheduled during that time.
- Bring copies of pertinent lab test results, medical records and all radiographs (films) from YOUR CURRENT AND PREVIOUS VETERINARIANS, INCLUDING SPECIALISTS, to the initial appointment or have your veterinarian(s) send them prior to the appointment. Digital images may be emailed to utvetref@utk.edu Advanced imaging such as CT, MRI and ultrasound, need to be brought on a CD in DICOM format.**
- If you have any pet insurance you want us to file, please bring the forms with you.

****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!