

ANIMAL BEHAVIOR (FAQs)

Three (3) Days before your appointment please make sure you have faxed or emailed all the necessary medical information as well as the completed UT Behavioral History (Short Consult) PDF Form to ymcbehavior@utk.edu or to our FAX number **(865) 974-3926**.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO THE APPOINTMENT?

- **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 Small Animal UTVMC 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.

Items that may be helpful

- Favorite treats (especially if you pet has a food allergy)
- Favorite toys
- Familiar blanket or dog bed
- Any training tools you currently or previously used (if you still have)
- 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
- Medical records 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.

HOW LONG ARE THE CONSULTATION APPOINTMENTS?

We appreciate your completing the extensive history before the consultation. It allows us to spend more time on treatment and training during the consultation. Consultations may last 1 to 3 hours.

HOW DO YOU TREAT MY ANIMAL'S BEHAVIORAL ISSUES?

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.