



What to Expect: After Hours Emergency Service

We appreciate you entrusting the care of our pet to The University of Tennessee Veterinary Medical Center. Please read the following document which provides information regarding your emergency room visit.

UPON ARRIVAL

Your pet will be **evaluated for stability** by a clinical year veterinary student or Licensed Veterinary Medical Technician.

CRITICAL PATIENTS

If your pet was found to be **critically ill and unstable** on presentation, they may be taken to the treatment area for immediate care. The estimated cost of immediate stabilization is **\$500**, and can include IV catheter placement, limited bloodwork, oxygen, or other stabilizing measures. After initial assessment, the doctor will discuss further treatment and diagnostic options with you.

STABLE PATIENTS

If your pet appears to be **stable**, they will be brought to our triage area. There, vital signs will be obtained and a small blood sample run to assure that red blood cell and blood sugar values are normal. After this, the student or technician will come back and obtain a full history. Our emergency examination fee that includes the above is **\$200**.

- Please be aware that at peak times, upwards of **3-4 hours** may be needed to fully assess a pet and discuss options for diagnostics and treatments if your pet has a non-life threatening injury or illness. This delay is often caused by the back-log of patients that came in prior to your pet, or because we are attempting to stabilize a pet with more critical, life threatening injuries or illnesses.
- During this time frame, your pet will be kept in our triage area under the supervision of technicians and doctors. They are provided water and litter boxes if needed. If you feel uncomfortable with being separated from your pet for this time and they are deemed to be stable, then you may wait with them in your vehicle or waiting room. However, please realize that this wait may be several hours. If at any time your pet's status changes, please notify a receptionist IMMEDIATELY.
- After full assessment, the doctor will discuss a diagnostic and/or treatment plan. If diagnostics are required (x-rays or bloodwork), this may require a few more hours before your pet is discharged. In this situation, you may either wait, or you may leave a deposit and leave the building. We will call you with updates if you choose to leave. In order to receive our calls, please make sure your phone accepts blocked numbers and/or turn off the "silence unknown caller" function. Phone calls from our hospital services may show up on your caller ID as "restricted" or "unknown caller." Please be prepared to answer those calls.
- In some situations, the student or technician may present a financial estimate to you that covers initial diagnostics and treatment for our most common emergencies. If this occurs, you may be able to leave a deposit and we will contact you with results later. You may also choose to speak with a doctor prior to any diagnostics or treatment. The option of referral to a specialist service will be discussed depending on the urgency. Advanced diagnostic testing may be postponed to regular business hours.
- Many specialty services are unavailable after hours. If we recommend that your pet see a specialist, your pet may be hospitalized or discharged with recommendations to obtain a referral to schedule an appointment. Be aware that if your pet has a chronic, non-emergent, non-life threatening condition, then you may be encouraged to seek care at your family veterinarian's facility during regular business hours.
- We recognize that emergency care can be expensive and unexpected. If you anticipate financial difficulties, we encourage you to apply for Care Credit. This is a medical credit card that allows payment of a balance over several months. Please visit www.carecredit.com for more details. Payment in full is expected at the time of discharge. Individualized payment plans are not available. For hospitalized pets, half of the high end of the estimate is due initially, with the rest due when your pet is discharged.