

What to Expect: Nutrition

EVALUATION APPOINTMENT INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION

A Board-Certified Veterinary Nutritionist® is certified by the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (www.acvim.org). This board certification requires members to have completed four years of veterinary training to become a doctor of veterinary medicine, a one year internship or equivalent, two to three years of additional residency training in veterinary nutrition, and passage of a credentialing process and comprehensive exams. Some 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, a licensed veterinary technician and a veterinary assistant.

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:

It is the owner's responsibility to ensure we receive all required documentation. We reserve the right to cancel any scheduled appointments if the required items are not received.

1. Baseline labwork

- 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. If you have booked an in-person appointment, your pet is required to be present. 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

If you have booked a video conference appointment, you will receive an email with a hyperlink prior to your appointment. You may use any device that has 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 there is trouble connecting virtually around the appointment time and we are unable to communicate through Zoom, you will receive a phone call to the phone number(s) listed on the Diet, Activity, and Household History form. You must ensure you are able to accept blocked/restricted phone calls.

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 or via email to collect payment. 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 will 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 approximately 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).

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. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure we receive all required documentation. We reserve the right to cancel any scheduled appointments if the required items are not received.

UTCVM is located in the **Eastern Time Zone** and our regular business hours are 9:00am - 5:00pm, Monday - Friday.

ADDITIONAL FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

The cost for additional follow-up appointments is \$112 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 follow-up 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

DIET PLAN COST ESTIMATES

New Diet Plans

All appointments with the nutrition service start with a nutrition consultation fee of \$275. Following the initial consultation, if a diet plan is appropriate for your pet, a written diet plan fee of \$265 will also apply. **The total charge will be \$540 and this option provides you with the following:**

- Comprehensive written diet plan with our recommendations for your pet

Please note that if you request additional diet options, to create variation for your pet, each additional diet is \$83+.

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 variety options.

Trial Diet Plans

All appointments with the nutrition service start with a nutrition consultation fee of \$275. Following the initial consultation, if your pet has a history of being selective about foods they are willing to eat, a trial diet plan (\$50) may be recommended. This trial diet provides temporary, unbalanced feeding options that can be used to gauge your pet's willingness to eat. Once we find a combination of ingredients that your pet will eat, a written diet plan fee of \$265 will also apply. **The total charge will be \$590 and this option provides you with the following:**

- Unbalanced trial diet suitable for temporary feeding in order to try out ingredient combinations before a final balanced diet plan is created
- Comprehensive written diet plan with our recommendations for your pet once trial diet success is reported back

Diet Plan Reformulations

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

associated with potential modifications.

- Recheck appointment with the veterinary nutritionist/resident - \$112
- Recheck appointment with the veterinary technician - \$58
- Supplement change (e.g., changing from Balance IT® to human supplements) - \$84
- Calorie change (e.g., increasing or decreasing the calories using the same ingredients) - \$84
- Requesting additional diet for variety (no new or progressed disease) - \$168
- Reformulation of current ingredients due to current disease progression - \$221
- Completely new disease diagnosis (these cases are treated like NEW diets) - \$265

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 \$275. Following the initial consultation, if a weight loss plan is appropriate for your pet, a written weight loss plan (\$150) fee will also apply.

The total charge will be \$425 and this option provides you with the following:

- Comprehensive written weight loss plan with our recommendations for your pet using appropriate commercial diets

Monthly weight rechecks via video conference, over the phone or in person are recommended for the duration of a weight loss plan and can be scheduled with the veterinary nutritionist/resident (\$112) or the veterinary technician (\$58).

Please note that homemade diets used for weight loss are more complex and are treated as standard diet plan formulations (\$265). They also often need to be reformulated multiple times during the course of an active weight loss plan and may incur multiple diet reformulation fees.

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



Veterinary Obesity Center

UTCVM VETERINARY MEDICAL CENTER

UTCVM and Royal Canin are working together to improve the health and wellbeing of pets by treating obesity through the UTCVM Veterinary Obesity Center. For patients that are overweight, we are offering a *FREE:

1. Initial in person evaluation by a UTCVM nutritionist
2. Blood and urine testing for routine health screening
3. Body composition assessment

For more information about the services of the UTCVM Veterinary Obesity Center, please contact Tammy Moyers, LVMT, VTS (Nutrition) utvoc@utk.edu

**Testing or procedures that do not fall into our standard protocol may incur additional costs.*