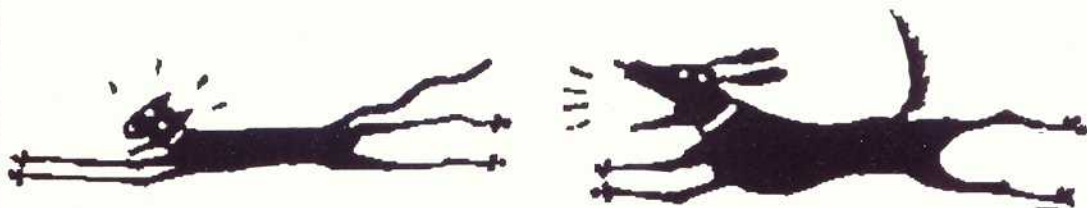


Let's Get Physical! Take Your Pet for Annual Health Exams



**Don't forget
to immunize
your pet! It's
one of the
best ways to
protect your
pet from
disease.**

**Ask your
veterinarian
about an
immunization
program for
your pet.**

Pets age at a faster rate than humans; they may experience age-related health changes before you realize it. Whether young or old, help protect your pet's health and quality of life by taking it to your veterinarian for an annual health exam. A health exam will help determine the general well-being of your pet and can identify potential problems. Early detection of diseases can improve your pet's chances of successful treatment. A typical pet health exam includes the following:

History—Be prepared to discuss your pet's health history. This is the time to mention any unusual behavior, changes in appetite, or other changes you may have observed. Your veterinarian will check the pet's temperature, pulse, respiration rate, and weight.

Nose, Ears, & Eyes—Your veterinarian will check your pet's nose for abnormal discharges, as well as changes in color, texture, moisture, or shape. Pets who shake their heads or scratch their ears may have an ear infection. Your veterinarian will perform a visual check of your pet's ear canals for signs of inflammation. Your pet's eyes will be examined for inflammation, cataracts, and overall condition.

Teeth & Mouth—Your veterinarian will check your pet's gums, teeth, tongue, and palate for abnormalities. Dental tartar can lead to infection, gingivitis, and periodontal disease. A teeth cleaning and polishing may be recommended.

Heart & Lungs—Your veterinarian will listen to your pet's heart and lungs. Early heart disease and respiratory problems can be detected during this examination.

Reproductive System—Your pet's reproductive system will be examined. If your pet is not already spayed or neutered, your veterinarian may discuss its many benefits beyond birth control.

Skin & Coat—The skin and coat are indicators of your pet's health. Your veterinarian will check the condition of the skin and hair, and will also check for fleas, ticks, tumors, and wounds.

Overall Body—Your veterinarian will feel the pet's abdomen to assess the condition of internal organs and will check the condition of the legs, feet, joints, muscles, and lymph nodes. Annual blood work and urinalysis may be warranted, especially for geriatric pets. Tests for heartworm or intestinal worms may be recommended or performed. This head-to-toe examination will help keep your pet happy and healthy!

A message from the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association's public information committee.



**Oregon
Veterinary
Medical
Association**