

What to Expect For Your Visit

So that you can make the most of your appointment at Penn Vet, we've created a fact sheet and checklist to help you prepare for your visit.

Preparing for Your Appointment

The best way for us to understand what's happening with your pet is for us to have as much information as possible. Be sure that we receive records from your primary care veterinarian prior to your appointment.

Generally, we request records from the past year, especially any bloodwork, imaging, or pathology results from any veterinarian that has taken care of your pet. Remember to ask your veterinarian to send images (x-rays, ultrasound, CT or MRI images). If these cannot be sent by email, please pick up a disk or the film radiographs to bring to your appointment. Bring a copy of your pet's vaccination history. Vaccine reminders are often printed on the most recent invoice from your primary care veterinarian.

Contact Information: Medical Records Referral Office

Megan Nelson, Referral Coordinator

Office: 877-736-6838

Fax: 215-573-4617

Email: pennvet.referral@vet.upenn.edu

- Remember to ask your veterinarian to send images (x-rays, ultrasound, CT or MRI images). If these cannot be sent by email, please pick up a disk or the film radiographs to bring to your appointment.
- Bring a copy of your pet's vaccination history. Vaccine reminders are often printed on the most recent invoice from your primary care veterinarian.

About Medications and Food

- Make a list of your pet's medications and bring this with you to your appointment. Include the name of the medication, the size (mg) of the tablet, and the amount your pet takes per day. For liquids, note the concentration (mg/ml) and the volume (mls) your pet takes per day.
- Note the name of your pet's food and how much he/she eats per day.
- Bring a list of any supplements that you are feeding your pet.
- Be prepared to tell us if your pet has any allergies to food or medications, or if they have had a past reaction to a certain medication or vaccine. We'll also need to know if your pet has a history of any problems with sedation or anesthesia.
- Please FAST your pet prior to their initial consult appointment, in case any additional imaging or sedation is needed. Fasting means no food after 10 pm the night before their visit. Water is fine to continue. You do not need to fast your pet if you have an appointment with:
 - Behavior Medicine
 - Exotic Companion Animal Medicine
 - Ophthalmology
 - Primary Care
- Please check with us ahead of time regarding special instructions if your pet requires any medications with food in the morning, or if your pet is diabetic.

Driving and Parking

Ryan Veterinary Hospital is located at 3900 Spruce St, Philadelphia, PA 19104

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<https://www.vet.upenn.edu/about/maps-directions>

Parking is Free. When you arrive at the hospital, please check in with our parking attendant who will assist you.

A Team-Based Approach

- As a teaching hospital, Penn Vet takes great pride in training the next generation of veterinarians and veterinary specialists. Your care team includes veterinary nurses, students, house officers, senior clinicians and support staff. All of our house officers – residents and interns – have earned their veterinary degrees and are practicing veterinarians. They are always supervised by attending specialists who are board-certified in their field of specialty.
- Even if you are primarily communicating with a house officer, rest assured that your pet has met one or more of our board-certified specialists, and that your pet's case has been reviewed in rounds with the larger team.
- It is important to remember that specialization is optional in veterinary medicine; not all veterinarians seek this additional training, which often encompasses 3-5 years beyond the 4-year veterinary degree program. Specializing in all aspects of veterinary medicine is becoming increasingly competitive.

What Will Happen at Your Appointment

Information Gathering and Physical Exam

Your veterinary student will begin your consultation by taking a detailed history. We always review records from your pet's primary veterinarian prior to your appointment, but we will likely ask additional questions to better understand what happened leading up to the diagnosis, as well as information about your pet's past medical history. Following the history, your pet's veterinary student will perform a detailed physical examination. Once your pet's veterinary student has taken their history and physical exam, they will leave the room to discuss your pet's case with the veterinary team. This includes the house officers (residents and/or interns) and the senior attending veterinarian.

Discussing Your Pet's Case: We ask our students to review their findings, and then develop a specific problem list, list of differential diagnoses, and diagnostic/treatment plan for your pet. This discussion may take 15-30 minutes, and often involves quizzing our students and reviewing your pet's disease process. The veterinary team will then return to the exam room with the student. We may repeat some of the same history questions or ask them in a different way, and we will also repeat the physical exam. Please prepare your day for a lengthy visit: thorough workups take time and complicated cases can be here for the duration of the day.

Additional Diagnostic Testing

In some cases, we may also recommend additional diagnostic testing such as blood work, ultrasound or advanced imaging in order to obtain more information about a particular disease process. Every effort is made to obtain diagnostic testing within 48 hours but scheduling and emergencies may make same day diagnostics difficult at times, so please be patient and trust that we are doing everything we can to find answers as quickly as possible.

Treatment Recommendations

Once we have all of the information above, we can make specific treatment recommendations for your pet and provide information on potential treatment side effects, prognosis, and cost. We try to discuss all treatment alternatives so that you can make an informed decision on what will work best for your pet and your family. There is no pressure to make a decision on the day of your appointment. Many families take information home and consider all of the options before electing to start treatment. We are always happy to answer questions that you may think of after your appointment.

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Admission or Discharges

- Following your appointment, your pet will either be:
 - Admitted to the hospital for continued care or
 - Discharged to go home
- If your pet will be going home with you, further care and monitoring instructions will be provided at discharge or will be emailed to you at home.

About Visiting Your Pet

Here is Ryan Hospital's patient visitation policy:

- Visiting hours are from 12pm until 7pm daily.
- Visits must be conducted by the clinician, student on the case or student assigned to facilitate the visit. If the student assigned to facilitate the visit is not directly involved with the case, they must inform the owner that they are unable to answer questions about the patient's status and prognosis.
- The person facilitating the visit must stay near the owner and patient at all times during the visit and must escort the owner at all times when walking to and from the lobby area.
- Visits are to be limited to 15 minutes in duration.
- The clinician or student must confirm with a nurse on duty that it is an acceptable time to bring owners into a patient care area to visit with their pet. Alternatively, the pet can be taken to a visitation room prior to the actual visit taking place.
- If the patient is to leave the patient care area during the visit the clinician or student must confirm with the nurse and be prepared with any therapies (fluids, oxygen etc.) that will ensure patient comfort and continuity of care.
- The clinician or student must confirm that the visitation room will be available for the visit prior to escorting the owner to the room. The visitation room will be available for the visit prior to bringing escorting the owner to the room.

The Recheck Appointment

All recheck appointments should be scheduled at check out or by calling the Appointment desk at 215-746-8387.

Fees and Policies

There will be an exam fee associated with your visit; treatments, diagnostic tests, and medication are additional and are due at discharge. If your pet is admitted to the hospital for hospitalization, an estimate will be provided and 50% of the estimated cost is required at admission as a deposit. The remaining balance will be collected when you pick up your pet. We accept Care Credit <https://www.carecredit.com> but do not offer other payment plans.

About Emergencies: We're Always Open

The Penn Vet Emergency Service is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year, including holidays. If you are concerned about your pet after hours, please call the Emergency Service at 215-746-8911, or bring your pet directly in for evaluation.

It is helpful to keep copies of your pet's most recent discharges from Penn Vet readily available in case you need to visit a different hospital on an emergency basis.

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Restaurants and Accommodations

- Greenline café is located on the second floor of Ryan hospital. Breakfast, lunch and coffee are available from 7 am to 3 pm. A seating area provides a place to wait during short procedures. Alternatively, if your pet is spending a few hours with us, you may want to set out for a meal or to explore university city using the following links.
- <https://www.universitycity.org/restaurants>
- <https://www.visitphilly.com/areas/philadelphia-neighborhoods/university-city/>