

“ 10 Things You Can Do To Make Your Trip To The Vet Easier and More Pleasant”

Going to the vet doesn't have to be an experience that you and your pet dread each time! I am going to talk about a few things that will make your experience much more pleasurable.

- 1) Call ahead and make an appointment. All of our lives are very hectic! It seems like there is never enough time for everything we have to get done in a day. By making an appointment, you greatly reduce the time you will have to wait to be seen as well as being less likely to get off schedule. We strive to be conscientious of our time and keep to our schedule; however, sometimes emergencies may arise. We ask that you be patient, and we will do our best to get back on track in a timely manner. We also understand that it is often difficult to take time out of your schedule to come in, so we offer drop-off appointments. This is where you can leave your pet in the clinic to be seen while you run errands or are at work.
- 2) Have your animal properly restrained in the waiting area. This will decrease the amount of stress on you and your pet. It is likely that there may be several animals in the lobby and the more control you have over your pet, the less likely a negative experience will occur. For small dogs and cats, we at Flanary Vet Clinic recommend pet carriers. For large dogs, we ask that they are on a leash.
- 3) Ask questions!!! Any concerns that you have, be sure and ask the doctor or technician. After the physical exam, the doctor will discuss any problems that were found and explain the impact on your pet's health. If there is something you did not understand, please ask. The more informed you are, the better your pet will do.
- 4) An ounce of prevention, is worth a pound of cure! As your pet goes through life stages, their health needs change also. Some prevention will be constant through out their life, such as, vaccinations, heartworm prevention, flea and tick prevention. Others, such as, nutritional requirements, preventative blood screening, and other medications, will change as your pet matures. As with any condition, the earlier it is detected, the greater the chance of a positive outcome.
- 5) Find a health care team you and your pet are comfortable with. This will make you more comfortable with their abilities and diagnosis. More importantly, it will ensure a long-term relationship, which will allow the healthcare team to recognize the small changes that could be overlooked if they do not know your pet well.
- 6) Gather information on healthcare providers before your first visit. Ask friends, family, and co-workers who they use for their pets' health needs. Then, I recommend that you visit without your pet to see the facilities and meet the staff before your first visit.
- 7) Have copies of your pet's records sent to the new clinic, or bring them with you to your first visit. This is so that we can be familiar with your pet's history and medical needs. It could also prevent duplication of costly testing.
- 8) If your pet has a favorite treat, bring some with you. We will have some treats available; however, if your pet will not eat them, having a familiar treat can go a long way to your pet relaxing and building a bond with the healthcare team.

- 9) Be observant of your pets. While they may not be able to talk, they can communicate with their actions. Pay close attention to their activity level. A change may be much more than aging. Second, any changes in appetite or water consumption may be indicative of metabolic disease such as diabetics, hypothyroidism, kidney, or liver disease. We, as humans, will tell someone if something hurts. Our pets are tough survivors, so these small signs may be all you see in the early stages of a serious health concern.
- 10) Last, but definitely not the least, is love therapy! Think about how your pet sees a normal visit to the vet. They are poked and prodded, not to mention the fecal exam and taking their temperature! I have yet to find a way to convince pets that this is for their own good; thus, the best thing I have come up with is love therapy. What this refers to is let's have some positive situations to try to counter act the negative. Bring your pet in occasionally for a gentle pat, a treat, and then go home. This way, every time they come in, they will not have a negative experience, and they will be more willing to come for visits.

I hope this has given some insight as to how to make your trip to the vet more pleasurable. If you would like more information on anything that was listed, we will be glad to discuss it in further detail.