

Internal Medicine Services

Updates and Progress Reports

If your pet is hospitalized, we know you are anxious to receive an update as soon as possible. We also want to keep you informed. The Emergency inpatient doctor and technicians are able to give you information after the morning rounds. Therefore, we ask that you not call before 10:30am. One of our doctors or technicians will always call if your pet's condition deteriorates. One of our doctors will call in the morning after rounds with a brief update on your pet's condition and let you know if your pet will be going home or remaining in the hospital. If your pet is to remain hospitalized, your Internist or Emergency Doctor will call you later in the day to update you.

Communication with your Regular Veterinarian

Throughout your pet's stay at VSH, your regular veterinarian will receive daily typed updates that have been reviewed by the Internist. He or she will also receive copies of all lab work, physical exams, and diagnostic findings. Veterinary Specialty Hospital strives to maintain open communication with you and your regular veterinarian throughout your pet's stay.

Admissions for Procedures

Admission time for an Internal Medicine patient is between 7:30am and 9:30am. Please allow for 15 minutes in the morning to answer questions and fill out any necessary paperwork with the technician checking your pet in. If your pet is having a procedure performed, please be sure that your pet does not have anything to eat after 10:00pm the evening before. Water is permitted until 6:00am the morning of the procedure. A technician will review the expectations with you when the procedure is scheduled. When you drop off your pet in the morning it is important that you leave a number where you can be reached both day and night to enable us to contact you with an update. If it has been more than 30 days since your last examination by an Internist, we recommend a brief recheck to reevaluate your pet's condition before scheduling a procedure. If there are any changes in your expectations or your pet's condition from the time of your last consult, no procedure will be performed without consulting with the Internist. Many of our patients are able to have their procedures performed on an outpatient basis. Your Internist will let you know if your pet is an exception.

The courtesy of 24 hours notice is appreciated when canceling or rescheduling an appointment or procedure. Please call (858) 875-7500 to cancel or reschedule a procedure with our client services staff.

Calls After a Procedure

The Internal Medicine schedule is often very unpredictable because many of our patients are seen on an emergency basis. We generally call clients immediately after the procedure

is completed and your pet is awake. However, sometimes we are delayed, cannot make contact immediately, or do not make contact on our initial call. If you have not heard from us by 7:00pm on the day of the procedure please call us. Please note that the time of your pet's procedure is tentative. Many of our procedures are scheduled to follow a previous procedure. Given this, along with emergencies, delays in our procedure schedule is common. Morning drop off times allow our Internists to examine your pet prior to the procedure. Our Internists see appointments, emergencies, and perform scheduled procedures throughout the day, often very late into the evening. We will call you as soon as we can.

When Can I Expect Results?

If your pet had a procedure and samples were submitted, results will not be immediately available. Cytology results usually require 1-2 business days for cytologist review. Biopsy results require 3-5 business days for pathologist review. Cultures may take up to two weeks for final results. More extensive blood panels may require more than 24 hours for results to become available. Holidays and weekends can extend waiting times for all lab work. As soon as results become available, a doctor or technician will contact you.

Doctor Call-Back Schedules

Please be sure to leave numbers where you can be reached day and night, as well as pager and mobile phone numbers. We often return calls late into the evening, so make sure to let us know if there is a time after which we should not call.

Visitation

We know how concerned you are about your pet's condition. We have found that visitation on the day of a procedure or surgery may not always be in your pet's best interest. We pride ourselves in aggressive pain management to keep your pet resting as comfortably and as quietly as possible on the day of a procedure. Pets may have a difficult time settling down after their family visits. For that reason we ask you to schedule a visit for the day after any procedure or surgery. Afternoon and evening is generally the best time to schedule a visit. Please limit visitation times to no more than 20-30 minutes in general or intermediate wards, or 15 minute maximum in ICU, as hospitalized patients require constant care in order to insure a healthy and speedy recovery. We try to allow family members personal time when they are visiting while still practicing quality patient care. Visiting in ICU may be cut short or prolonged at the discretion of the ICU nurse.

Discharges

On the day of discharge, please schedule a discharge time with the doctor or technician. Scheduled times will help alleviate waiting time. The doctors or technicians will go over discharge instructions. If you have ANY questions, we will want to answer them before you leave to ensure you will be able to provide proper care for your pet at home. Please allow at least 20 minutes of your time for discharges. If a recheck examination with your specialist is needed, please schedule this appointment before leaving as our Internists' schedules are booked far in advance.

Questions and Concerns

We want to be sure that you are well informed on your pet's condition at all times. The Internist will discuss all options and potential complications for any procedures to be performed or treatment plans for hospitalized patients. If you have any questions, we always encourage you to have them addressed prior to committing to a procedure or treatment plan. We have Emergency doctors and technicians in the hospital nights, weekends, and holidays and will always have access to your pet's medical record. If you are ever concerned that your pet is not doing well and you wish to have them evaluated, you may do so at any time (whether or not your pet's Internist is in the hospital). We welcome your comments as to how we can improve our care for you and your pet.

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