

ATTENDING A NEUROLOGY APPOINTMENT



Information for clients visiting the neurology and neurosurgery department

What to expect when you arrive

- When you arrive, please go to the main reception. Once there, our client care team will take your details and a member of the neurology team will come and meet you and your pet in one of our consult rooms.

What to expect from the neurology appointment

- One of the neurologists will firstly take your pet's history. Although we might have your clinical history from your veterinarian, we will question you thoroughly to establish all the details about your pet. We will then perform a clinical and neurological exam to assess your pet's condition.
- When possible, diagnostic investigations such as MRI and CSF collection (lumbar puncture) will be performed on the same day as the consultation. On some occasions, it is more appropriate to perform other tests in the first instance, such as blood tests, rather than perform an MRI immediately. Occasionally, emergency cases have to be prioritised for MRI over routine appointments.

What is an MRI and a CSF tap?

- An MRI is a type of medical scan which uses a strong magnetic field to generate images and is particularly good for imaging the brain and spinal cord.
- A cerebro-spinal tap (CSF) tap involves inserting a needle either at the back of the neck or lower back and taking a sample of the CSF (which surrounds the brain and spinal cord) for analysis. Your pet may have clipped patches on their limbs where we may have taken bloods or placed an intravenous catheter. There may also be a clipped patch at the back of their neck or lower spine if a CSF tap was taken.

What are the risks?

- Although the MRI itself is non-invasive, your pet will require a general anaesthetic to ensure that they remain still during the imaging. The neurologist will discuss with you the risks associated with an anaesthetic in your pet and with performing a CSF tap.
- It is important you tell us if your pet has any metal implants, as the MRI is a very strong magnetic field.

Preparation

- Please do not feed your pet on the morning of the consultation. A late dinner the night before your appointment is allowed. If you have a kitten or a puppy, less than 6 months of age, please contact us and we will discuss suitable feeding time.
- If your pet is on any medications, please continue them if they can be given without food.
- Please bring any medication your pet is currently receiving to the neurology consultation.
- If your pet is on a special diet that you would like us to continue during hospitalisation, please do not hesitate to bring it with you. Unfortunately, we are not allowed to keep raw food in the hospital.

Hospitalisation

- Your pet will stay hospitalised for at least the day if further tests are advised, or longer if a surgery is planned.
- We would request you do not bring personal belongings (collar, lead, bedding etc..) into the hospital for infectious disease control.
- Although we know how difficult it is when your pet is hospitalised, please be assured we have an amazing team not just looking after them medically, but also making sure they have plenty of individual attention and care. We would always try to accommodate visitation for our longer-term hospitalised patients, but please be aware that due to the COVID pandemic there may be limitations to this.

Discharge

- At the time of discharge a member of the neurology team will explain the diagnostic findings and prescribe medication if needed.
- Your pet may have had a sedation or general anaesthetic whilst they are with us. Common side effects after a general anaesthetic may include drowsiness, lethargy, coughing or gagging (from the tube inserted into the windpipe), nausea, diarrhoea, or loss of appetite.
- It is best to feed small, easily digestible meals after a general anaesthetic. If your pet has a loss of appetite for more than 24 hours, frequent or severe vomiting, or profound lethargy then please contact us.



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