



GETTING YOUR DOG TO THE VET

- Try to make your dog's trip to the vet as fun and enjoyable as possible. Perhaps take him/her to the dog park before your appointment to help ease anxiety. Exercising your dog prior to a visit may also reduce their energy level and excitability.
- Dogs are often nervous about unfamiliar environments and smells. If your dog is very anxious about coming to the vet, consider bringing your dog in every few days for a couple weeks before your appointment so he/she can get a treat and become accustomed to new smells.
- Consider bringing your dog's favourite toy or blanket with you. Smells from home or comfort items can reduce your dog's fear or anxiety.
- Be sure to remain calm and avoid getting angry at your dog. Dogs will often parallel their behaviour depending on how their owner is acting. Positively reassure your pet and play with him/her at the clinic so he/she associates the vet as being a fun place. Try giving some treats while waiting to see the vet so your dog's good behaviour at the vet is rewarded.
- Be careful not to reward your dog when he/she is over-excited, anxious, aggressive, or quite fearful. Praise good behaviour and calmness but don't give your dog excessive attention or rewards when he/she is behaving poorly.
- While waiting to see the vet or during examination, try to keep your dog's attention on you. Seeing how you respond to a routine veterinary visit may help keep them calm. Don't allow your dog to fixate on other animals in the clinic or become too involved with them. Other animal's excitability may encourage your dog to also become overactive or anxious. Command your dog to sit or stay while you are waiting and reward good behaviour with praise or treats.
- Always inform the veterinarian and office staff if you think your dog may act aggressively during the visit. It is a natural instinct for some dogs to bite when fearful, however office staff should nevertheless be informed of any previous incidents so precautions may be taken.
- Always bring your dog to the vet on a leash, even if you don't normally use one during walks. Having control over your dog at the vet signals that they should listen to you and obey your commands.