



CLIENT PREPARATION GUIDE

Some health problems are not always straightforward. Some conditions may be difficult to diagnose, involve several causes, require long-term management, or not have a cure. This can cause fear and stress to both you and your pet. At the Veterinary Specialty Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador, we understand and will do everything we can to help.

Refer to our website (www.vscnl.ca) for the current copy of this *Guide*, our *Terms and Conditions*, and other resources.

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| <p>As partners in your pet's care, you can expect us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Listen and respond to your fears and concernsProvide timely care based on best practices and standardsProvide honesty so you can make educated decisions | <p>As partners in your pet's care, we expect you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Work with our staff with patience and understandingAsk questions and provide constructive feedbackRecognize staff have families, pets, and feelings too and should be treated with respect and dignity |
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General Information: Check off any items which you may wish to discuss with us.

- Medical Records:** We encourage all owners to retain a copy of their pet's complete medical records, including laboratory data. This can be extremely valuable if you have to take advantage of our emergency services while your primary care practice is closed. Email format is ideal as most clients can access their email via their cell phones.
- Consent:** You must provide consent to treatment by signing an estimate, which includes estimated costs. Before you give consent, ask questions if you do not thoroughly understand the treatment recommended. A 50% deposit of the services you approve will be required before the services are conducted. The remaining balance must be paid in full when your pet is ready to go home.
- Patient Centered Communication:** While we encourage all family members to be involved with their pet's care, we request you designate one person as the main contact. Ideally, the contact would live with the pet and know their medical history, current symptoms, medications and/or allergies, and have the authority to make healthcare and financial decisions. We recommend that the main contact attend all appointments and be the point of phone communications. Without such a system in place, a family member and/or doctor may lack awareness of, or the means to, address key medical issues.
- Travelling Clients:** A list of pet friendly hotels in our area is listed on our website.
- Cell Phones:** To minimize disruption, please silence your phone while onsite.
- Personal Items:** We do not allow personal items (i.e., leashes, bedding, kennels, etc.) to remain onsite. We are equipped to ensure your pet's comfort remains a priority.
- Safety:** Pets must remain kenneled or on a short leash; retractable leashes must be locked. Regardless of your pet's temperament, do not allow your pet to "make friends" with another patient. Inform us if you require help transporting your pet to/from your vehicle. If you observe other safety concerns, please notify us immediately.
- Isolation Precautions:** If your pet may/does have a condition or illness that requires isolation precautions, please inform us before you arrive. Specific instructions must be followed which may include utilizing our isolation unit entrance.
- Privacy:** It is our standard protocol to send your pet's medical records to their primary care veterinarian. If you wish we did not send these records, please notify the customer service representative when you register. To protect the privacy of all clients, photography is not permitted onsite.
- Your Wishes:** To provide us with written instructions of your preferences for care in emergent situations, we require owners to sign an Advanced Directive during admission – regardless of their pet's condition.

- Feedback:** If you wish to share your compliments or concerns, call our Quality and Referral Manager at 709-221-7838 during business hours Mon – Fri.
- Cancellations:** We require **48-hour** advance notice for cancellation of any scheduled appointment or procedure.

Admission Protocols: Admission processes/requirements vary.

- Scheduled Consultation/Recheck:** Arrive 15 minutes early to allow time for registration. Prepare to spend a minimum of 90 minutes at the hospital.
- Scheduled Diagnostic and/or Procedure:** Admission is between 7:00 – 7:30 am, unless we approve another time.
- Emergency Service:** Cases are prioritized based on the nature of the emergencies and order of arrival. An emergency fee will apply upon arrival and wait times will vary.

APPOINTMENT PREPERATION: When possible, some general things to prepare may include:

- Referral:** Ask your primary care veterinarian for a copy (including supporting documentation) for your records.
- Notes/Questions:** Write down details about your pet's history (e.g. dates/signs of problems) and questions and/or concerns you want us to address.
- Medications/Allergies:** Bring medications in original packaging, including vitamins/supplements, herbal remedies, and over the counter medications. Complete our *Patient Home Allergy & Prescription List* – we can add it to your pet's medical file. When your pet is discharged, the list may need to be updated.
- Diet:** If your pet requires a special diet, please label all bags, cans, and containers. We do not accept raw food. If your pet is on a raw food diet, you may cook it before bringing it in.
- Insurance Policy/Form:** If your pet has health insurance, familiarize yourself with the policy. Bring any relevant insurance documentation, including a blank claims form, if applicable.
- Reading Material:** While we offer reading material, some clients bring their own.
- Food/Water:** Your pet may/will require sedation and/or anesthesia. The night **before** admission, your pet must not have any food, including treats, after **8:00 pm** (unless otherwise instructed). Your pet may have water up to one hour before coming to the hospital. If your pet has diabetes, please inform us when booking the appointment.
- Restriction:** Cats should be kept inside the night before a scheduled appointment.
- Elimination:** Encourage your pet to empty their bladder and bowels prior to entering the hospital. Note, if your pet is scheduled for an abdominal ultrasound, a full bladder upon arrival is preferred.

DISCHARGE PREPERATION: Our goal is to help your pet return home as soon as they are medically ready and aim to provide you with as much notice as possible of their discharge time. In addition to the specific discharge plan tailored for your pet, some general things to prepare may** include: *** If the below conflicts with your pet's discharge plan, always follow the discharge plan. If you are unsure, call us!***

- Transport:** Identify a family member or friend who can help transport your pet safely home.
- Bedding:** Comfortable bedding in a safe, quiet, warm space where you can monitor your pet.
- Exercise Restrictions:** We may recommend restricting exercise to a small area or kennel and/or not allowing your pet outside unattended. Dogs may need to be taken out on a short leash to urinate. Anti-slip surfaces (mats) may be recommended.
- Diet:** Your pet may be allowed a small meal and water. Ensure your pet does not have free access to their food or another pet's food.
- Progress Evaluations:** If progress evaluation(s) are recommended at VSCNL, please make arrangements before leaving. If follow-up care is with your primary veterinarian, please contact them directly.