

The Key to a Healthy Pet is Early Detection and Prevention of Disease

The gradual onset of health problems in an apparently healthy pet often go unnoticed. There are many conditions, that if diagnosed early, can be completely reversed or controlled for extended periods of time.

Regular dental care, vaccinations, control of parasites and a balanced diet are important for good health care. Laboratory testing for early detection of changes in health status of your pet is also important.

Laboratory tests are an important means by which your veterinarian can diagnose blood disorders, kidney & liver disease, diabetes, infection, cancer, thyroid disease and other hormonal problems. The promotion of quality pet health care through a wellness program can add years of vitality and extend your pet's life.

<p>Complete Blood Count (CBC) White Blood Cells (WBC) • Neutrophils Bands • Lymphocytes • Monocytes Eosinophils, Basophils</p> <p>These numbers tell how many of each type of white blood cell are present & whether or not they appear normal. White blood cells help fight infection. It is important to know whether the count is low, normal or high. White blood cell numbers can increase in response to inflammation & infection. In leukemia, which is a cancer of the blood system, either the numbers of white blood cells are increase or their appearance is abnormal, or both. White blood cell numbers can decrease with severe infection or with bone marrow disorders.</p>	<p>Total Protein Albumin • Globulin • A/G Ratio</p> <p>Protein levels. Albumin may be decreased with disorders of the intestine, kidneys, liver, or decreased nutrient intake. The globulin level may also decrease due to intestinal disease and may cause increase in response to inflammation.</p>
<p>Platelets</p> <p>Platelets help with blood clotting. It is important to make sure that these numbers remain normal or close to normal.</p>	<p>Creatinine • BUN • Phosphorus</p> <p>Test of kidney function (should be run in conjunction with urinalysis for the most accurate assessment of kidney function).</p>
<p>Red Blood Cells (RBC)</p> <p>Tests to evaluate red blood cells (size, shape, number)</p>	<p>Calcium • Calcium/PO4 Ratio</p> <p>Elevated calcium levels can be a sign of a wide variety of diseases. The most common cause is lymphosarcoma (a type of cancer).</p>
<p>Packed Cell Volume (PCV) Hemoglobin</p> <p>Tests for anemia (low red blood cell levels).</p>	<p>Glucose</p> <p>Blood sugar. Increased levels may indicate diabetes. In cats, elevations may occur in conjunction with stress. A subnormal level may occur with several disorders, including liver problems, severe infection, certain types of cancer, Addison's disease (a disease of the adrenal glands), and malnutrition.</p>
<p>MCV • MCH • M RBC Morphology (shape)</p> <p>These tests help tell which type of anemia is present.</p>	<p>Amylase • Lipase</p> <p>Tests for inflammation of the pancreas.</p>
<p>ALT • ALP • AST • GGT</p> <p>Liver enzymes. These tests help indicate that there may be a problem with the liver. They also may be abnormal with inflammation of the pancreas.</p>	<p>Sodium • Potassium • NA/K Ration • Chloride</p> <p>Important body electrolytes. It is especially important that potassium levels be monitored in sick animals and in animals with decreased kidney function or adrenal disease.</p>
<p>Total Bilirubin</p> <p>A test for jaundice. Increased levels usually indicate a liver disorder (with or without concurrent disease of the pancreas) or damaged red blood cells.</p>	<p>CPK</p> <p>Muscle enzyme. Increased levels indicate muscle injury or inflammation.</p> <hr/> <p>T4</p> <p>Thyroid test. In cats we look for levels above normal (hyperthyroidism) and in dogs we look for subnormal levels (hypothyroidism). This is a screening test. If the result is abnormal, more detailed thyroid testing may be necessary to determine the best course of treatment.</p>

Urinalysis

Urinalysis is a very important means of evaluating overall kidney function, especially when done in conjunction with blood tests. Urinalysis is also a key test for determining if there is a urinary tract infection or if there is inflammation in the urinary bladder. Urinalysis also helps to confirm, along with blood tests, whether or not an animal has diabetes (with diabetes, either sugar or both sugar and ketones are present in urine).

Complete Urinalysis

Color, Appearance, Specific Gravity, Occult Blood, WBC/HPF (White blood cells), RBC/HPF (Red blood cells), pH, Protein, Glucose, Ketones, Bilirubin

Urine Cortisol: Creatinine Ratio

A screening test for Cushing's disease in dogs (abnormal adrenal gland function)

Urine Culture and Sensitivity

Urine culture testing determines whether or not there is a bacterial infection in the urinary tract. Sensitivity testing determines which antibiotics will likely work best in clearing infection. By determining which bacteria are involved and which antibiotics are most indicated, we have a better chance of controlling the infection more quickly & completely.

*Note: In cats over 8 - 10 years of age urinary tract infections, when present, are often "silent". This means that there frequently are no signs of any abnormality such as straining to urinate, urinating more frequently, or presence of blood in the urine. This is why in older cats a urine culture should be done, along with blood tests and standard urinalysis, as part of a routine health check as well as for any older cat that is ill.

Fecal Tests

Fecal tests are done to evaluate for presence of intestinal parasites (e.g, Giardia, roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, coccidia). It is important to check periodically for parasites (once to twice a year depending on the animal's environment), even if stools are consistently normal. Parasites can cause significant intestinal problems in both humans & animals (some parasites can be transmitted from animals to humans). Tests for parasites are done routinely in animals with abnormal stools. Specific treatment is prescribed based on results.