

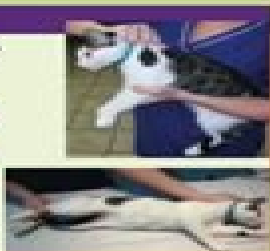


Veterinary Assistant



Patient Restraint

Learning how to restrain dogs and cats properly is essential for safety.



Taking a Thorough Medical History

- A good history can yield clues that often help lead to a diagnosis.
- Listen closely to what clients tell you and take notes.
- If the information is not readily offered by the client, be sure to find out:
 - Nature of current health challenge (symptoms noticed by client)
 - Onset and duration of current health challenge
 - Current vaccination and parasite control status
 - Past health issues (not already noted in medical record)
- Recent changes in:
 - Behavior
 - Home environment
 - Husbandry practices
 - Elimination patterns
 - Eating and drinking patterns
 - Activity level
 - Weight status (loss or gain)

Maintaining Medical Records

- Whether handwritten or input electronically, medical records must thoroughly and accurately document each client and patient interaction.
- Medical record form, style, and level of detail will vary with each individual practice.
- Each time a pet is presented with a medical complaint, record the following on the medical record:
 - Patient history
 - Primary (and, if applicable, secondary) complaint(s)
 - General patient assessment
 - Physical exam findings, including vital signs
 - Diagnosis or differential diagnosis
 - Treatment protocols
 - Prognosis
 - Notes and observations pertaining to ongoing patient treatment and monitoring
 - Follow-up plan (diagnostic and treatment)
- Additional items to include in medical records:
 - Documentation of client conversations and interactions (phone, electronic, in person)
 - Patient and client information forms
 - Consent forms
 - Diagnostic results and reports
 - Anesthesia records
 - Discharge instructions
 - Patient reminders
 - Financial records

SOAP Approach to Medical Record Entry

Subjective: Hands-off assessment of patient, including history, attitude, temperament, obvious physical abnormalities, and other visual, olfactory, and auditory clues that could be pertinent to the patient's condition.

Objective: Hands-on physical exam findings, including vital signs, as well as initial diagnostic steps and results.

Assessment: Diagnosis (or differential diagnosis) and prognosis.

Plan: Treatment plan, further diagnostics, and/or follow-ups.

Performing a Physical Exam

Step 1: Assess General Appearance

- Mentation
 - Bright, alert, and responsive (BAR)
 - Depressed or uninterested
- Abnormal physical presence
 - Weakness
 - Pain
 - Ataxia
 - Coughing
 - Respiratory distress
 - Lameness
 - Other
- Body score
 - Normal, obese, malnourished, emaciated, or cachectic

Step 2: Obtain Vital Signs

	Temp. (°F)	Pulse	Respiration
Dog	99.5–102.2	70–140	10–30
Cat	99.5–102.2	110–140	20–40

Step 3: Perform a Hands-On Exam

Choose your own systematic approach, and do it the same way every time; practice will improve your hands-on skills. Abnormalities to note include:

- Eyes
 - Abnormal color of sclera
 - Abnormal or unequal pupil size
 - Discharge or squinting
 - Corneal cloudiness
 - Abnormal eye movement (nystagmus)
 - Eyelid mass
 - Entropion or ectropion
 - Nictitans (third-eyelid) protrusion
- Ears
 - Presence of odor or discharge
 - Excessive hair
 - Head tilt
 - Hair loss on pinnae
 - Parasites
- Nose
 - Discharge
 - Excessive respiratory "noise"
 - Ulcerations or masses
- Oral cavity
 - Slow capillary refill time (>2 sec)
 - Poor or abnormal mucous membrane color
 - Excessive mouth odor
 - Periodontal disease
 - Retained deciduous teeth
 - Foreign bodies, masses, or ulcers

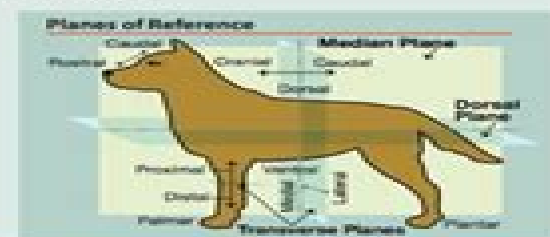
- Cardiovascular and pulmonary systems (auscultation of heart and lungs)
 - Heart murmur
 - Diminished heart sounds
 - Abnormal heart rate or rhythm
 - Harsh lung sounds
 - Weak femoral or jugular pulse

- Lymph nodes
 - Enlarged (symmetrical vs. asymmetrical)
 - Tender

- Abdominal palpation
 - Tense
 - Tender
 - Palpable mass

- Urogenital
 - Discharge or tenderness
 - Mass in mammary region
- Neurologic
 - Paralysis or partial paralysis
 - Toe drag
 - Slow proprioception
 - Exaggerated or diminished reflexes

- Musculoskeletal
 - Poor muscle tone
 - Muscle atrophy
 - Joint pain or inflexibility
- Skin and coat
 - Poor hair texture or hair loss
 - Lumps, bumps, or hernias
 - Scabs, crusts, or infections
 - External parasites
 - Discoloration or rashes
 - Wounds



Robert Jones Bandage

- Useful for the temporary immobilization of long bone fractures below the elbow and stifle.
- When using for immobilization, always remember the more padding, the better.

Application

- Place tape stirrups along the lateral and medial aspects of the lower limb; place a tongue depressor between the loose ends of tape that extend beyond the limbs to allow for easy separation later.
- Wrap the limb in roll cotton, starting from the paw and working up the leg; apply multiple layers; the toes should remain visible at all times.
- Starting from the paw and working up the leg, compress the roll cotton using a conforming gauze layer.
- Peel the ends of the tape stirrups from the tongue depressors and reflect them onto the gauze covering.
- Cover the bandage with a layer of stretch wrap and secure ends with white tape.
- Bandage must be kept dry and the toes inspected periodically for swelling (a sign that the bandage is too tight).

Recording an EKG (Lead II)

- Patient can be standing or in lateral recumbency.
- Attach clips in following locations:
 - Right arm (RA-White)/Left arm (LA-Black): On skin proximal to olecranon on caudal aspect of appropriate forelimb.
 - Right leg (RL-Green)/Left leg (LL-Red): On skin over patellar ligament on anterior aspect of appropriate rear limb.
- Moisten clip sites with alcohol or conductive gel.
- To assess arrhythmias, record lead II at a paper speed of 25 mm/sec for 30 seconds (1 cm = 1 mV); if an arrhythmia is noted, record lead II for an additional 60 seconds.
- To get a good measurement of P-QRS-T waveforms, record lead II at a speed of 50 mm/sec for 10 seconds (1 cm = 1 mV).
- If the QRS complex extends beyond the paper margin, decrease sensitivity so 1/2 cm = 1 mV.



Arizona Vet Tech Study Guide

D Keegan



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