

The Importance of Routine Blood Tests for Your Pet

Each year at your pet's annual check-up, your vet may recommend getting a blood test. Ultimately you have the final decision if you would like the test completed and that choice should be respected.

However, it is best to understand the reasons behind the blood test and the information it provides especially during a procedure.

Recommending a Blood Test:

Some of the circumstances where your vet may recommend a blood test includes:

- Your first visit at the veterinary clinic
- During a semi-annual wellness exam
- If your pet is acting abnormal
- A 'pre-anaesthetic blood test'
- Before starting new medication
- During a senior wellness exam

The Pre-anaesthetic Blood Test

While your vet team will be using the most advanced techniques and equipment during the procedure, the blood test will reveal any underlying health conditions that could impact the successfulness of the operation itself. After finding out this knowledge, the procedure can be completed with extra precautions in place like keeping watch for any troublesome symptoms or signs that your pet could be experiencing.

This shows how important doing routine blood tests are. Your pet could be acting completely normal however there could be problems developing in places such as their kidneys. When there is a problem developing in the kidneys, it can take years for your pet's behaviour to change and show you that they are experiencing any pain or discomfort.

Reasons for a Blood Test

Health problems could be developing in your pet without you knowing; if only they could talk to us! Early detection is key to treating all health conditions before they become worse. Blood tests are vital because:

- As your pet gets older, more health problems tend to develop (similar to humans)
- Dogs age faster than humans. This means that each annual blood test is as important as ever to discover any underlying health problems.
- Especially during anaesthetic, it is important that your pet's haemoglobin, kidney and liver are fully functioning.
- Very similar to the importance of human blood tests, the information found about your pet's health is invaluable.

What if the blood test comes back abnormal?

To discuss blood results, a team member from your veterinary clinic will call you. Through a blood test, your vet will be able to find any illnesses such as kidney disease, liver disease, thyroid disease, diabetes and cushing's syndrome. As serious as they sound, through early detection, the illnesses can be monitored and treated. If one of these conditions are noticed in the results, then they will look further into the problem and why this has developed. This could mean that further testing needs to be conducted such as an ultrasound.

The blood test results could come back clear, without any health problems appearing. More than anything, the tests are a way to gain vital information, and give you peace of mind that your pet is in good health without any nasty surprises emerging.