

Wellness Exams and Immunizations

Why exams are required at Bayview Animal Hospital:

Wellness exams are the most important preventive health procedure and diagnostic aid available for your pet. Wellness visits and pre-vaccine exams are just as important to pets as annual exams are for us. Early detection can benefit the patient's overall health and can often allow us to treat and cure a disease or problem before it is too late.

Pre vaccine exams are required for three very important reasons:

1. Immune system compromise

To ensure vaccine efficacy, the doctor must make sure the pet is healthy. The vaccine may not respond well or provide the intended protection if given to a sick animal.

2. Vaccine reaction

The injection site should be monitored for vaccine reaction.

3. Maturation rate in animals is very fast

Because young animals mature at such a fast rate, a complete physical examination must be performed to spot any developmental concerns.

The comprehensive exam checks the following parameters in detail:

- ✓ Weight
- ✓ Temperature
- ✓ Body condition
- ✓ Coat and skin quality
- ✓ Cardiovascular function
- ✓ Respiratory function
- ✓ Teeth and gum condition
- ✓ Eyes, Ears, Nose, Throat
- ✓ Rectal/anal sac condition
- ✓ Abdominal palpation to detect abnormal intestine, kidney, liver or spleen size, as well as detect large tumors from these organs
- ✓ Lymphatic system

- ✓ Basic neurological system
- ✓ Musculoskeletal system
- ✓ Behavior and socialization progress.

A general blood panel is an additional tool available to evaluate the function of the organs and systems mentioned above. It evaluates the liver, kidneys, immune system, hematopoietic (red and white blood cells) system, some hormonal systems, as well as the electrolyte balance. Blood work is very important:

- ✓ to gain a baseline of normal for the patient
- ✓ as well as detect problems at an early stage.

Abnormal values are often uncovered even when the exam is normal or when the client does not appreciate any problems with the animal-like low thyroid, early kidney or liver disease, heart worms or mild anemia.

Yearly fecal exams are also very important because they can uncover parasites they may not be causing a problem yet, but left untreated can lead to severe diarrhea and vomiting, anemia or malnutrition. Some fecal parasites may even be transmissible to humans.