

Preventing disease:

Why diagnostic tests are IMPORTANT to your pet

Help your pet live a long, healthy life by staying on top of internal disease—one test at a time.



Although your veterinarian can learn a lot by performing a physical examination of your pet, there are some signs of disease that can only be detected with further testing. And this doesn't just apply to sick pets—it's important to understand what's going on inside with pets that appear healthy, too.

Here's a breakdown of critical diagnostic tests we may recommend to ensure your pet is as healthy on the inside as he or she appears to be on the outside.

> Fecal exam

We check your pet's stool twice a year for signs of intestinal disease and parasites. We will examine the stool for outward signs of disease—such as blood, mucus and abnormal consistency or color. We'll also perform a fecal flotation procedure and take a look with a microscope, which is the best way to uncover the presence of the most common internal parasites, such as roundworms, hookworms or whipworms.

> Heartworm test

Each year, we collect a small sample of your pet's blood to test for heartworms, which can be fatal in both dogs and cats. Infected mosquitoes spread heartworm disease. Even pets that stay indoors are susceptible, as mosquitoes can slip into homes and bite an unprotected pet. And even if your dog or cat is on heartworm prevention year-round, it's critical to do this blood test annually, as even one missed or late dose of preventive can put them at risk.

> Complete blood count (CBC) and serum chemistry panel

Symptoms of some conditions or diseases won't show up until your pet is very sick. That's why we test your pet's blood annually to detect and try to prevent disease as early as possible. These blood tests tell us whether your pet is anemic (not enough red blood cells) or fighting infection. We can also tell whether internal organs, such as the liver and kidneys, are functioning properly. In some cases, treatable diseases such as diabetes can be detected with these tests.

> Urinalysis

Like a blood test, a urine test gives us an understanding of how healthy your pet is on the *inside*. A urinalysis once a year offers clues that point to underlying causes of disease, such as a bladder infection or kidney disease. Once we have the results of this test and the blood tests, we'll have a picture of your pet's internal health and will be well on our way to detecting disease as early as possible.