

Preparing for your visit to the vets

It is well known that a visit to the vets can be stressful for both you and your dog. It is a foreign environment where they are examined and handled by strangers, with unfamiliar sights and smells. It can also bring up anxieties from previous visits associated with pain and discomfort. There are a few steps that you can take to help reduce this stress before your visit to the surgery. We want to make the visit a positive and fun experience. Although this isn't always possible, by starting when they are a puppy or new to the practice is the perfect opportunity to introduce them.

Type of lead/harness or carrier

Smaller dogs can sometimes feel more comfortable in a carrier, but this needs to be something they are used to and not just for visits to the vets.

Harnesses can be really useful if your dog pulls on the lead protecting their delicate neck.

However, this does not always give good control when being examined therefore it is a good idea to wear a collar that the lead can be attached to if required. It is important that the harness fits correctly to prevent them from wriggling free.

If using a retractable lead this should be locked with minimal slack.

Treats

bring some of your dog's favourite treats. They might not always like the one we have here! This can include little bit of cheese, chicken or sausage that is extra special reinforcing a positive experience.

Toys

If your dog is more toy orientated then bring along a familiar toy to help them relax and stay calm.

Pheromone products

If necessary use a pheromone product such as Adaptil or Pet Remedy. This can be sprayed on a blanket in the carrier or on a small bit of cloth attached to their collar. You can also get Adaptil collars which last for 4 weeks.

Food

When possible try not to feed your dog a full meal before their appointment preventing them feeling nauseous when travelling (adding additional negative experience).

Go for a walk

Take your dog for a walk before your appointment to exhaust some of their energy and allow them to relieve themselves before you come to your appointment.

