

Taking the History

This is arguably one of the most important steps. The initial dermatology consultation lasts one hour. Before you and your pet arrive, I will review your pet's history either from ourselves or the referring vet. Firstly, we will sit down and go through the dermatology referral form, this allows me to gain more information on your pet and their skin condition. We will discuss things like main concerns, areas affected, your pet's daily routine, general health, diet, parasite treatment and response to treatments previously given.

Examination

After taking the history I will examine your pet's skin and perform a full general examination.

Tests

By this stage we will have a lot more information and will have discussed possible causes of your pet's skin problems. There may be several possibilities which we need to narrow down in order to try and get to the root of the problem. Unfortunately, one single test normally doesn't give us all the answers, so we will likely need to do multiple. Tests may include skin scrapes, tape strips, swabs, hair plucks, fungal cultures, blood samples (including allergy testing) and biopsies. A lot of tests can be done during the consultation using the microscope for example checking for bacteria, yeasts and parasites. However, some tests may take a bit longer or need to be sent to an external laboratory.

Discussing treatment and follow up consultations

Once we have gathered all the above information, we will be able to discuss diagnosis and treatment. Treatment options will be discussed and together we will find the best treatment option for your pet.

Follow up consultations normally last 30 minutes, in this time we can assess progress made and recheck samples.