

The Follow-up Examination

- A follow-up examination is a physical examination that is usually performed a few weeks after the initial examination.
- The examination is scheduled to evaluate the effectiveness of treatment, assess healing after a surgical procedure, or monitor the progression of a disease.
- In addition to the examination, diagnostic tests, such as blood tests or radiography (obtaining x-rays), may be needed.

What Is a Follow-up Examination?

If your pet is being treated by a veterinarian, it's likely that you will be asked to return for a follow-up examination. This physical examination is usually scheduled a few weeks after the initial examination and may be done for a number of reasons, such as:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment or medication
- To assess healing after a surgical procedure
- To monitor the progression of a disease
- To determine if a medication is being maintained at the proper blood level
- To modify the treatment, if needed
- To ensure that there are no side effects to treatment

Depending on your pet's condition, your veterinarian may recommend additional diagnostic tests at this time, such as blood tests or radiographs (x-rays).

What Should I Do Between Examinations?

It is important for you to follow your veterinarian's directions exactly, including giving all of the medications as directed. Many treatments fail because

doses of medications such as antibiotics are missed or stopped prematurely. If you have difficulty administering a medication or if your pet shows signs of side effects, such as lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, or pain, consult your veterinarian.

You should not discontinue treatment because it does not appear to be working. Some medications require time to take effect. Also, a medication that is effective in one animal may not be effective in the next. Your veterinarian may need to try different medications, and evaluate their effects, before arriving

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at the one that is best for your pet. A follow-up examination allows your veterinarian to assess your pet's response to treatment and adjust treatment recommendations as needed.

What Are the Benefits of a Follow-up Examination?

A follow-up examination is important for the comfort and welfare of your pet. Missed follow-up examinations can result in recurrence or worsening of your pet's condition. The follow-up examination will enable your veterinarian to evaluate your pet's progress and modify treatment as necessary to ensure that your pet is healthy and comfortable.