

Scheduling Medical Appointments - Guidelines

I. The term "medical appointment" refers to all appointments other than scheduled wellness visits. These can range from acute emergencies to chronic conditions. Many of these patients need to be seen the same day upon which the owner calls -- some immediately. The following instructions are only guidelines. If the animal feels completely normal it is probably not a true emergency. However, if the owner is concerned or overly distraught, the case should be considered an emergency. If an owner ever questions about whether the animal could be seen sooner because of their concern for the animal (as apposed to simply wanting a more convenient time), the answer should always be, "yes."

II. When making decisions about scheduling consider the following:

Is the animal in danger?

4 PM is the last time to call for lab work, otherwise it will be almost 24 hours before obtaining any results.

Often with cats, it is necessary to keep them in the clinic for many hours in order to obtain a urine sample.

X-rays, laceration repairs, and procedures requiring sedation take time. We may need the lunch hour to accomplish these tasks.

Always be mindful of what else is already on the schedule.

III. Drop everything and get the doctor immediately upon any of the following coming into clinic (these are potential life-threatening emergencies):

HBC (Hit By Car)/fell from car/other massive trauma

unconscious/collapse

hemorrhage

active seizure

bloated abdomen with pain

severe pain

respiratory distress

unable to stand/profound weakness/dragging rear limbs

eye protrusion/bleeding from eye

injected poison

IV. Not immediately life-threatening, but need to be seen ASAP (work in):

swollen face

possible seizure but appears normal now

bloody diarrhea (not just diarrhea with some blood in it)

straining to urinate - especially male cat or very hemorrhagic (NOTE: if very lethargic, this falls under above)

vomiting - not keeping anything down

fight wounds, including possible abscess on cat/wounds with maggots

non-weight bearing limp

open surgical site

IV. Earliest available morning appointment or as soon as possible after lunch (may need to drop off if afternoon is already busy)

swollen ear

mild lethargy (especially if senior pet)

straining to urinate (female)

mild limp

respiratory disease - mildly lethargic/ chronic /senior

V. Same day (when convenient for owner)

redness of surgery site

vomiting occasionally - eating/feeling good

loose feces - feeling good

respiratory disease - young/feeling great