

Testing can provide you with peace of mind.

When you place your pet in our hands, you trust us to provide the best possible medical care. That is why we may recommend certain tests when your pet is having a medical problem or is scheduled for anesthesia.

Regardless of age, physical examination and medical history of your pet, we recommend diagnostic testing to identify health problems and begin treatment as early as possible. These tests are especially helpful when your pet just isn't feeling right and symptoms are hard to define.

If your pet is going to be placed under anesthesia, we strongly recommend pre-anesthetic testing. Anesthesia is extremely safe for healthy pets. But, if your pet is not healthy (and sometimes it's hard to tell without testing), complications can occur both during and after the anesthetic procedure. We can minimize potential risk when we know the health status of your pet before administering anesthesia.

The top 4 reasons to test your pet before anesthesia.

- ✓ You deserve **peace of mind**. Testing can significantly reduce medical risk and ensure your pet's health and safety.
- ✓ **Pets can't tell us when they don't feel well**. A healthy-appearing pet may be hiding symptoms of a disease or ailment. For example, a pet can lose up to 75% of kidney function before showing any signs of illness. Testing helps us evaluate the health of your pet's liver and kidneys, so we can avoid problems related to anesthesia.
- ✓ **Testing can reduce risks**. If results of the pre-anesthetic are within normal ranges, we can proceed with confidence, knowing the anesthetic risk is minimized. On the other hand, if results are not within the normal ranges, we alter the anesthetic procedure to safeguard your pet's health.
- ✓ **Testing can help protect your pet's future health**. These tests provide baseline levels for your pet and become part of his or her medical chart for future reference.

Pre-anesthetic and diagnostic testing Why they're important for your pet's health



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Testing can reduce risk.

We recommend some or all of the following tests to determine your pet's health status, so we make the best medical decisions, especially before administering anesthesia. Although performing these tests cannot guarantee that complications won't occur, it can reduce the risk to your pet and provide you peace of mind.



Your pet test guide.

Blood Chemistry

Albumin (ALB)

A protein which is produced by the liver. Reduced levels of this protein can point to chronic liver or kidney disease, intestinal disease, or intestinal parasites such as hookworm infection.

Alanine Aminotransferase (ALT)

An enzyme that becomes elevated with liver disease or injury.

Alkaline Phosphatase (ALKP)

An enzyme produced by the cells lining the gall bladder and its associated ducts. Elevated levels can indicate liver disease or Cushing's syndrome.

Amylase (AMYL)

An enzyme produced by the pancreas. The pancreas secretes amylase to aid in digestion. Elevated blood levels can indicate pancreatic and/or kidney disease.

Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN)

BUN is produced by the liver and excreted by the kidneys. Abnormal levels can indicate dehydration, and liver and kidney abnormalities.

Calcium (Ca²⁺)

Increased levels can be seen with diseases of the parathyroid gland and kidneys or as an indicator of certain types of tumors.

Cholesterol (CHOL)

Elevated levels of cholesterol are seen in a variety of disorders including genetic disease, liver and kidney disease and hypothyroidism.

Creatinine (CREA)

Creatinine is a by-product of muscle metabolism and is excreted by the kidneys. Elevated levels can indicate kidney disease or urinary tract obstruction.

Blood Glucose (GLU)

High levels can indicate diabetes. In cats, high levels can indicate stress, which can merely be a result of the trip to the veterinary hospital. Low levels can indicate liver disease, infection, or certain tumors.

Phosphorus (PHOS)

Elevated phosphorus can be an indicator of kidney disease.

Total Bilirubin (TBIL)

Bilirubin is a breakdown product of hemoglobin and is a component of bile. Bilirubin is secreted by the liver into the intestinal tract. Blood bilirubin levels are useful in diagnosing anemia and problems in the bile ducts.

Total Protein (TP)

The level of TP can detect a variety of conditions including dehydration and diseases of the liver, kidney or gastrointestinal tract.

Electrolytes

Sodium, Potassium, Chloride (Na⁺, K⁺, Cl⁻)

The balance of these electrolytes is vital to your pet's health. Abnormal levels can be life threatening. Electrolyte tests are important in evaluating vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration and cardiac (heart) symptoms.

Hematology

Hematocrit (HCT)

Provides information on the amount of red blood cells (RBCs) present in the blood. A low hematocrit indicates anemia.

Complete Blood Count (CBC)

A more complete panel of tests. A CBC provides detailed information on RBCs, white blood counts (WBCs) and platelets. The total WBC and differential (individual cell counts) can indicate infection, leukemia, stress, inflammation, or an inability to fight infection. Low platelets can indicate a bleeding problem. We might advise that surgery be delayed if anemia, infection or especially a low platelet count is present because these conditions could cause serious surgical complications.

Morphologic Inspection

Looking at the cells through a microscope can provide information on the type of anemia or inflammation, or other abnormalities such as leukemia.

Serum T4

This is a measurement of the level of thyroid hormone circulating in the blood and is helpful in identifying thyroid disease. Thyroid disease occurs in both dogs and cats and can have a serious impact on health if left untreated.

Urinalysis

The urine contains by-products from many organs such as the kidneys, liver and pancreas. Abnormal levels of these by-products can indicate disease including diabetes, liver and kidney disease.

Electrocardiogram

Detects heart rate and electrical rhythm. Certain abnormal rhythms and heart rates can be deleterious to animals undergoing anesthesia.