Preventive care not only helps to detect disease in its early stages, when it is most likely to respond to treatment, but it also can help you avoid significant medical expense and risk to your pet’s health.

Routine preventive care also helps your veterinarian establish normal baseline laboratory values when your pet is young and healthy. Even subtle changes from baseline values can help identify disease as your pet ages, long before they become apparent to you or your veterinarian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organ/System</th>
<th>Potential health risks</th>
<th>Possible result if left untreated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teeth and mouth</td>
<td>Gingivitis, periodontal disease, oral cancer</td>
<td>Oral pain, tooth abscesses, tooth loss, systemic infection, cancer progression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nose and throat</td>
<td>Inflammation/infection, bleeding, tumors</td>
<td>Progression of local infection, systemic infection, breathing difficulty, nosebleeds, cancer progression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver and gallbladder</td>
<td>Inflammatory liver disease, reaction to certain drugs and toxic substances, cancer, Cushing’s syndrome, stones of the gallbladder and bile ducts</td>
<td>Jaundice, liver failure, anemia, bleeding disorders, neurologic signs, cancer progression, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidneys</td>
<td>Acute and chronic kidney diseases, kidney stones, kidney infection, cancer</td>
<td>Irreversible kidney damage, kidney failure, high blood pressure, blindness, anemia, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart and lungs</td>
<td>Heart muscle disease, leaky heart valves, irregular heart rhythms, heartworm disease, bronchitis, pneumonia</td>
<td>Poor circulation, fluid buildup in lungs and/ or belly, congestive heart failure, pneumonia, sudden death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joints and bones</td>
<td>Arthritis, hip dysplasia, torn cruciate ligament in knee, degenerative back disease, immune-mediated disease, infectious disease (e.g., Lyme disease), cancer</td>
<td>Pain, reduced mobility, progressive disease, paralysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glands/endocrine system</td>
<td>Diabetes, thyroid disease, adrenal disease</td>
<td>Cataracts, blindness, wasting, hair/coat changes, hair loss, excessive thirst/urination, skin infections, collapse, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes and vision</td>
<td>Corneal ulcers, cataracts, dry eye, glaucoma, deformation and/or infection of eyelids</td>
<td>Pain, progressive blindness, loss of eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digestive/ gastrointestinal system</td>
<td>Intestinal parasites, intestinal blockage, other intestinal infections, inflammatory bowel disease, colitis, pancreatitis, cancer</td>
<td>Malnutrition (inability to absorb nutrients from food), wasting, chronic diarrhea, gas, abdominal pain, cancer progression, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>Allergies, fleas, mites, ticks, lumps, skin infections, ear infections</td>
<td>Hair loss, foul odor, vector-borne infections, worsening infections, hearing loss, cancer progression, death</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information about preventive care, talk to your veterinarian—your best resource for information about the health and well-being of your pet.
Preventive care for your canine friend

Your pet’s health changes with age, just as yours does. But, our pets actually age much faster than we do.

Do you know how old your dog is relative to you, or in “people years?” Use the chart (at left), based on your dog’s age and weight, to find out!

Regardless of your pet’s age, you play a key role in helping him combat illness and remain as healthy as possible. Remember, your dog cannot describe symptoms to you, but he will show you signs of disease or illness. Awareness of the signs of the most common diseases is one way to help reduce your pet’s risk. It’s a little scary to consider that 10% of pets that appear healthy to their owners and veterinarians during their annual visits have underlying diseases.

Preventive care may include:

1. Chemistry tests to screen for kidney, liver, and pancreatic disease, as well as to check sugar levels
2. Fecal parasite screening to identify if your pet has been exposed to vector-borne (e.g., heartworm) or other infectious diseases
3. Fecal tests to rule out intestinal parasites
4. Complete blood count (CBC) to rule out blood-related conditions
5. Electrolyte tests to ensure your pet isn’t dehydrated or suffering from an electrolyte imbalance
6. Urine tests to screen for urinary tract infections and other diseases, and to evaluate the kidneys’ ability to concentrate urine
7. Thyroid test to determine if the thyroid gland is producing too little thyroid hormone
8. Cardiac tests to rule out heart-related issues
9. Electrocardiogram (ECG) to screen for an abnormal heart rhythm, which may indicate underlying heart disease

Early detection. Reduced risk. Peace of mind.

While the physical exam is important, the picture of your pet’s overall condition is not complete without these diagnostic tests. Blood testing can frequently detect illness in your pet before any outward signs of disease can be seen. Testing gives veterinarians immediate insight not otherwise available.

Testing can uncover hidden health problems in your dog

Blood

- CBC is used to screen for:
  - Anemia (low red blood cells)
  - Inflammation
  - Infection
  - Stress
  - Leukemia
  - Bleeding problem
  - Inability to fight infection
  - Hydration status

Kidneys

- Blood and urine tests can indicate:
  - Early renal disease
  - Renal failure
  - Infection
  - Stones
  - Cancer
  - Abnormalities resulting from long-term medications

Pancreas

- Biochemistry tests can indicate:
  - Pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas)
  - Diabetes mellitus
  - Abnormalities resulting from long-term medications

Heart and Lungs

- Immunoassay tests can detect heartworm disease. Biochemistry tests can indicate cardiac damage.

Thyroid

- Biochemistry and serum T4 tests can indicate Thyroid disease.

Teeth

- Dental exams uncover abnormalities in teeth and the soft tissue of the mouth. Oral disease may indicate secondary health problems.

Liver

- Biochemistry tests can indicate:
  - Liver disease
  - Cushing’s syndrome
  - Certain cancers
  - Dehydration
  - Obstruction of the bile ducts
  - Abnormalities resulting from long-term medications