



# FEAR FREE VETERINARY VISITS FOR DOGS



Sunrise Pet Clinic is committed to providing a Fear Free veterinary experience, to the best of our ability, for every pet we care for. When your dog is under stress, the memories of any events occurring during that time will be very powerful, and how your pet is handled during veterinary visits may have long-standing consequences for our future ability to handle him or her. Here are some tips for getting dogs into the clinic with less stress for both of you:

- ♥ **Start these techniques with your puppy! If you have an adult dog, start today!**
- ♥ **Practice riding in the car** if your dog is not a big fan.
  - Let him eat high-value treats in the car that he only gets in the car
  - Gradually get him to voluntarily get in the car for treats
  - Let him eat treats first with the car off, then with the car on without driving
  - When he is comfortable in the car reward calm behavior in the car with treats
  - Once comfortable, go for short rides in the car and return home or go somewhere you dog loves, like the park or for a doggie playdate
  - Play calming music in the car, such as the *Through a Dog's Ear* series.
  - Also try using a dog appeasing pheromone spray in your car.
- ♥ **Bring your dog hungry and bring your dog's favorite treats with you**
- ♥ **Give a couple small treats in the car**
- ♥ **If your dog is anxious around other pets, give us a call from your car when you arrive.** You can wait in the car with your dog until we are ready to bring you right into a private exam room.
- ♥ **Give a treat when you arrive in our lobby,** while practicing "Sit" and "Lie down" or other behaviors you dog knows well. If your dog is too anxious to perform commands, give him a treat for simply remaining calm.
- ♥ **Give a treat when you settle into the exam room**
- ♥ **Save the rest for your technician and veterinarian!** This way, they will have more opportunity to give treats to help make the experience more pleasant!
- ♥ **Utilize a dog appeasing pheromone collar.** Dogs have incredible sense of smell and can be relaxed by these pheromones.
- ♥ **Bring a blanket or bed with you** that your dog loves to lie on at home for a familiar and calming sight, feel and smell.
- ♥ **Try a Thundershirt or other stress reducing wraps.** These cloth wraps help dogs feel secure by applying gentle pressure around their torso.
- ♥ **Ask your veterinarian about additional supplements or medication for anxiety or carsickness if needed**

- ♥ **Visit our clinic during slow times, when things are calm.** Call us ahead of time, so we can help you plan your visit at a time when it will most likely be calm in our lobby and we will have an exam room available for you to utilize.
  - **Practice calm behaviors** like “Sit”, “Wait”, and “Down”
  - **Practice getting on and off the scale**, giving a treat for a calm “Sit” on the scale.
  - **Practice walking through doors** that make that your pet nervous.
  - **Practice being on the Exam table.** Make sure your dog’s favorite treats are always there! Ask our team if you can just practice without an exam – only loves and pets.
  - **Let us give treats too!** Either use yours or let us “spoil” your pet with something new and different! Remind us if your dog has any food allergies or is on a Prescription diet!
- ♥ **Consider additional short-acting sedation in the clinic if recommended.**