

Perform a Canine Check-Up at Home

Just like people need to have annual checkups with doctors, our pets need to visit veterinarians at least annually. Between visits it is our responsibility as pet owners to checkup on our animals ourselves.



Here's how:

- A couple times a month take a few minutes and check over your dog from head to toe. Once you get to know your dog, it will be easier for you to tell if anything has changes between checkups. Look for lumps, bumps, painful areas, fleas, ticks or irritated skin.
- Look into your dog's eyes. Make sure they are clean and clear and don't show any signs of infection, injury or redness. Also examine your dog's ears and nose and check for redness, odor, pain or swelling.
- Check your dog's mouth for redness, swelling, bleeding or bad breath. Check it's teeth for tartar. All these are signs of tooth or digestive problems.
- Listen to your dog's breathing and make sure it does not sound rapid or strained. Your dog's heart rate should be between 70 and 120 beats a minute. Check for this on it's chest or between it's front legs.
- Weigh your dog regularly and feel its sides. You should be able to just feel the ribs but not see them.

Finish your exam with lots of praise and some treats, a nice grooming or a game so it will think of a checkup as a positive experience and look forward to the next one.