



## Word of the Day: Wellness Exam

A wellness exam is also known as a **check-up**. Pets who visit the veterinarian have a wellness exam to make sure they are healthy. This is different from when a pet needs to visit the vet because they appear sick or injured.

It is important for pets to have a wellness exam at least once a year. People also need to visit the doctor for a wellness exam or check-up every year to make sure everything is normal and help prevent against possible disease or illness.

## Discussion Questions

- Have you ever been to the doctor for a wellness exam/check-up?
- What does your doctor check during your wellness exam?
- Why do you think people and pets need to have wellness exams/check-ups?

## Wellness Exam Tools



### Stethoscope

Stethoscopes help vets listen to an animal's heart and breathing.



### Thermometer

Vets use a thermometer to take an animal's temperature.



### Otoscope

Otoscopes help vets look inside of an animal's ears.



### Scale

A scale is used to measure how much an animal weighs.



### Needle

Sometimes, vets will draw blood or give a vaccine during an exam.



### Hands

Vets use their hands while wearing gloves to examine a patient.

## What do veterinarians look for during a wellness exam?

A veterinarian will check different body parts on a pet during its wellness exam. Each body part is examined to make sure it is healthy and working properly. Read below to learn about what a veterinarian looks for during a wellness exam.

### Eyes



A vet will check to make sure the eyes are clear. Eyes should not be red or leaking.

### Ears



A vet will check that the ears are clean and clear with no smell or redness.

### Nose



A vet will check that the nose lets the pet breathe easily. The nose should not leak.

### Throat



A vet will rub the throat, or neck, to check for lumps or any pain.

### Mouth



Vets shouldn't smell bad breath! Teeth should be clean and the gums should be pink.

### Heart



[Click Me!](#)

A vet will use a stethoscope to listen to a pet's heartbeat. **Click on the heart to listen!**

### Lungs



A vet will use a stethoscope to listen to a pet's breathing.

### Stomach



A vet will rub the abdomen (where the stomach is) to check for lumps or any pain.

### Limbs



A vet will check to see if the pet is limping and that the arms and legs move correctly.

### Body Covering



A vet will check to make sure the pet's fur, feathers, scales, or skin are clean and healthy.

# Patient Chart

Pet's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Animal: Dog  Cat  Bird   
(circle one)

Rabbit  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Did you check the...?*

Eyes 

Heart 

Ears 

Lungs 

Nose 

Stomach 

Throat 

Limbs 

Mouth 

Body Covering 

## Activities

*Note: Be sure to emphasize to your young one that a wellness exam for your family pet should only ever be performed by a veterinarian. If your child would like to pretend to be a veterinarian, a stuffed animal or toy is a fun and safe way to practice their clinical skills!*



### Infants/Toddlers

#### Heads, Shoulders, Knees & Toes

*Materials: stuffed animal or pet*

- It's always fun to sing Heads, Shoulders, Knees, & Toes, but you can do so with a twist! Have your child sing along with you as you point out the head, shoulders, knees, and toes of your pet or stuffed animal.
- Challenge your child to identify the different body parts on the animal.



### PreK - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

#### Practice Wellness Exam

*Materials: clipboard, patient chart, stuffed animal, toy vet tools*

- Help your child practice their very own veterinary wellness exam by letting them follow along the Patient Chart on page 3.
- Introduce the different tools used to do a wellness exam from page 1 and demonstrate how they are used. Then, let your child practice on a stuffed animal. If you don't have toy tools, this can be a fun opportunity for you and your child to craft some homemade veterinary instruments at home!
- Make it interactive - listen to the sound of heartbeats online as you check the "heart", or the sound of breathing as you check the "lungs".
- Take the time to discuss the wellness exam with your child. You can ask them questions, such as:
  - Why are you checking the eyes/ears/nose? What are you looking for?
  - What might a sick pet look like? Sound like? Smell like?
  - What might a healthy pet look like? Sound like? Smell like?