



# Halifax Veterinary Center

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## YEARLY EXAMINATIONS

We recommend an annual physical exam for every pet. Our pets age much more rapidly than we do and thus need yearly exams even when they are young. As for geriatric pets, twice yearly exams may not even be enough. The information we gather at each exam becomes part of your pet's medical history. It can be critical when an emergency or sudden illness arises.

An annual physical exam is the best health insurance. Even healthy looking pets can be infected with disease. Regular examinations can help prevent problems by catching them before they become serious. An annual physical exam at our clinic, together with a comprehensive vaccination program, is the best way to keep your pet healthy. An examination includes the following:

1. Examine ears for ear mites, infection, inflammation, excessive hair or wax.
2. Palpate thyroid and lymph nodes for signs of tumors or infection.
3. Listen to the chest for heart murmurs, irregular heartbeat and abnormal lung sounds.
4. Assess diet and nutritional needs. Significant weight changes can be an early warning sign of disease or Obesity (a common problem in both dogs and cats).
5. Palpate your pet's abdomen for abnormal masses or tenderness.
6. Assess legs, joints and spine.
7. Examine eyes for cataracts, glaucoma, inflammation, or other abnormalities.
8. Evaluate nose and nasal passages for signs of upper respiratory disease or allergies.
9. Evaluate mouth and teeth and check the color and condition of gums. Ninety percent of cats and dogs will develop some form of periodontal disease by the age of three.
10. Hair coat should appear healthy and well groomed. Dry brittle hair or hair loss may indicate an underlying illness. Check for external parasites or infection.
11. Rectal exam to check for abnormalities. Check anal glands. Additionally, analysis of a stool sample for internal parasites or infection and a blood sample taken for blood parasite screening.
12. Overall neurological exam to check for nervous system dysfunction or behavioral problems.