

# 10 THINGS THAT MAKE FEAR FREE VETERINARY VISITS DIFFERENT

## FEAR FREE HAPPY HOMES

Helping pets live happy, healthy, full lives



What do we mean when we say that a veterinary visit is Fear Free? A veterinary team member who is Fear Free certified wants your pet to be happy when he comes through the door of the clinic.

Fear Free doesn't mean that your pet will never experience anything uncomfortable at the veterinarian—he may be injured or ill, after all—but it does mean that we make every effort to reduce any fear, anxiety, and stress related to examinations and procedures. Here are 10 ways we help your pet stay comfortable and relaxed from arrival to departure.

- 🐾 **The waiting game is over.** We have species-specific waiting areas! You also have the option of waiting in your car with your pet until you are texted or called to come in. If an exam room is available, you'll be taken right in so your pet can roam the room and settle in.
- 🐾 **No more sitting on slick, cold surfaces.** Your pet will have a nonslip surface to stand on such as a yoga mat or a warm, pheromone-infused towel.
- 🐾 **Relaxation rules.** Pheromone and aromatherapy diffusers emit calming substances into the air, and pet-friendly music works its calming effect on the central nervous system. (You might benefit, too.)
- 🐾 **Eye contact is for you, not your pet.** Fear Free trained veterinary team members will initially avoid eye contact with your pet and focus on you, instead. This helps your pet feel less stressed because he's not the center of attention and gives him time to check out his environment and become accustomed to the team member's presence.
- 🐾 **Got treats?** Bring your dog or cat in hungry because Fear Free trained veterinary team members will be handing out many small but delicious treats throughout the visit to welcome and distract him from procedures and reward him for cooperation.
- 🐾 **Considerate Approach.** Fear Free trained staff members get on your pet's level for introductions.
- 🐾 **Playing doctor.** In addition to treats, our veterinary team members utilize a variety of distraction techniques such as toys to help your pet be comfortable.
- 🐾 **"The back" is out.** Whenever possible, our Fear Free trained team members will perform exams and procedures right there in the exam so your pet will be reassured by your presence and you can assist as needed. Of course, if you prefer not to see certain procedures, such as those involving needles, we can take your pet to another area, and you'll have the assurance that he will be treated kindly and respectfully.
- 🐾 **Pre-visit Sedation.** If needed, we will prescribe anti-anxiety or other calming medications or supplements to help make the car ride and the visit more enjoyable and less frightening for your pet.
- 🐾 **Emotional rescue.** Our veterinary team members will note your pet's emotional response to the visit and what treats and techniques worked best to reduce any fear, anxiety, and stress that may have been expressed. This will help to make future visits even better.