For the Health of Your Pet... How to Tell if Your Cat or Dog May Need Veterinary Care

This information sheet lists the more common signs of health and illness in dogs and cats. Dogs and especially cats can "hide" illnesses and other ailments, so try not to let them fool you!

**EYES**

**Good Signs**
- clean
- clear and bright
- responsive to visual stimuli

**Warning Signs**
- watery
- red
- filmy
- cloudy
- discolored
- dry
- inflamed (swollen)
- hypersensitive to light
- pupils are unequal in size
- pupils are overly dilated or overly constricted
- showing third (or middle) eyelid
- showing discharge
- itchy (animal rubs at eyes)
- painful (animal squints)

**EARS**

**Good Signs**
- clean (both outer and ear and canal)
- pink and clean (inner ear)
- responsive to noise

**Warning Signs**
- showing discharge (waxy or other)
- crusty
- red or inflamed
- hair around ear is matted
- scabbbed
- fly-bitten
- itchy (animal shakes head/scratches ear)
- foul odor
- painful (animal cries when ear is touched)

**NOSE**

**Good Signs**
- clean
- free of discharge

**Warning Signs**
- scabbbed
- showing discharge
- crusty
- cracked
- congested or blocked

For more information or veterinary clinic care, call or visit our shelter.
APA of Missouri
1705 S. Hanley Road
St. Louis, MO 63144
314-645-4610
www.apamo.org

Credit: HSUS Animal Sheltering Magazine
MOUTH
Good Signs
■ free of odor
■ teeth are clean
■ gums are pink
■ animal appears to swallow normally
Warning Signs
■ unusually red or pale
■ dry
■ salivating (animal is drooling)
■ foul odor not caused by food
■ foreign bodies
■ showing discharge
■ swollen or inflamed
■ gums are pale, white, purple, or inflamed
■ teeth are loose, pitted, broken, or tartar-covered
■ animal has trouble swallowing

LEGS/FEET
Good Signs
■ legs support weight evenly (no limp)
■ pads are clean and smooth
■ nails are healthy looking
Warning Signs
■ animal favors one leg
■ animal has limited motion
■ animal is weak or uncoordinated
■ joint feels tender
■ pads are cracked or hard
■ pads have matted hair between them
■ nails are long, short, or ingrown
■ legs show swelling, lumps or lesions

ANAL/GENITAL
Good Signs
■ area is clean and free of discharge
■ stool is normal
Warning Signs
■ area has discharge
■ stool is watery and bloody
■ animal is constipated
■ area around anus shows swelling or lumps
■ one or both testicles are not descended (not in scrotum)
■ one testicle is harder and/or larger than other

GENERAL
APPEARANCE
Good Signs
■ animal is bright, alert, and responsive
■ skin is elastic
■ animal is balanced, coordinated
■ temperature is normal
■ animal is interested in surroundings, oriented
Warning Signs
■ animal is very thin or obese
■ animal has wounds or abscesses
■ animal has swelling, lumps, or bumps
■ mammary glands are swollen or oozing discharge
■ skin does not spring back (animal is dehydrated)
■ animal appears uncoordinated
■ animal tilts head
■ animal repeatedly circles
■ abdomen is bloated
■ animal appears lethargic
■ animal appears hyperactive
■ animal appears disoriented

NORMAL RANGES FOR TEMPERATURE, HEART RATE, AND RESPIRATORY RATE FOR HEALTHY CATS AND DOGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature (rectal)</th>
<th>100-102.5 Farenheit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart rate (at rest)</td>
<td>Large dogs 80-100 beats/minute</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium dogs 100-120 beats/minute</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small dogs and cats 120-180 Beats/minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory rate (at rest)</td>
<td>16-26 breaths/minute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit: HSUS Animal Sheltering Magazine