

Fear Free Practice Tips

If your pet could talk, what would it say?

51% of pets do not like coming to the vet. If you are like one out three owners, you don't like coming here, either. You feel bad seeing your pet miserable. You worry that their behavior will be less than stellar. You have to pull them from hiding, fight to get them into a carrier; you don't want to deal with vomit in the car, peeing in the carrier or the pathetic meowing and whining on the way to the clinic. And that's all before you get to the check-in desk!

These tips may help make your visits easier.

1. Take that carrier out of the basement/garage/barn several days before the appointment. Wash the dust from it, place a nice, cozy towel or blanket inside and place a few treats in there too. Leave it in sight of your everyday activities, such as the kitchen or living room. Place food bowls next to the carrier (*habituate your pet to the crate so it is a familiar, if not pleasant place to be*). You can also spray it with a pheromone to create a feeling of security within the carrier.
2. The day of the visit, *bring your pet in hungry*. We will be feeding treats throughout the visit. You can bring their meal with you if you worry about stomach upset or dietary restrictions.
3. Wipe down or *spray the carrier with a pheromone* 20 minutes before loading the pet.
4. Have trouble getting the pet in the carrier? Try some treats or try *backing* them into the carrier. You might also take the top off beforehand, set the pet inside, then put the top on and secure the door.
5. Prepare the car before loading the pets. For indoor only pets, going outside is a shock. Being cold is uncomfortable, *so warm the car up*, or turn on the A/C during summer. *Drape a towel over the crate* to shield them from the elements between home and vehicle or vehicle and the clinic. Roll a towel and place it on the seat so the *crate is level* as it sits on the seat.
6. Be mindful of how you carry the carrier. Keep it quiet, keep it level. Do not swing the carrier around, and be careful going through doorways.
7. *You can use compression shirts* on cats and dogs to make them feel secure. This works in 30% of pets.
8. Ask the receptionist for a comfort packet ahead of time. It will have instructions for loading pets and transporting them, plus a pheromone packet to wipe the carrier before travel.

Read more about the pheromones you can use here:

Adaptil for Dogs <http://www.adaptil.com/us/#redirected>

Feliway for Cats <http://www.feliway.com/us/#redirected>