

Early Detection of Potential Issues



First, it's really important to establish a baseline for your pet so you know what's normal and what's not normal.

Second, do physical exams of your pet on a routine basis:

- Go through the skin and the hair coat with your hands and fingers looking for anything odd feeling, like lumps or bumps or changes in coloration in the skin
- Look in the dog or the cat's mouth to see if there's anything going on there. Sometimes they can get cancers that begin in their mouth. They can also get dental issues that can cause serious pain and infection
- Look in their eyes. Any sorts of changes in coloration or clarity of the eyes can be early indications of problems
- Changes in muscle tone, particularly asymmetry. One of the really great tools that we have when we examine a person or an animal is that we're all symmetrical from left to right. For example, if a dog has some structure you're feeling on a leg on one side and they also have it on the other, you can be pretty sure that what you are feeling is supposed to be there – it's normal. But if they have a lump on one side that's not on the other, that could potentially be a problem.



IMPORTANT: If something is different or doesn't feel right to you, that is your cue to pick up the phone and call your veterinarian to schedule an appointment. The last thing that we want to do is not address something that, down the road, is going to turn out to be serious. It's always better to have a look.