

Dermatology Services



10435 Sorrento Valley Road
San Diego CA 92121
(858) 875-7500
www.vshsd.com

Dermatology Appointments

Dermatology patients are typically seen on an out-patient basis. The dermatology service takes appointments from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, Tuesday through Thursday, and on alternate Fridays and Saturdays.

Do not bathe your pet or clean your pet's ears for at least 3 to 5 days before their appointment. Much of the information that is needed to diagnose and manage your pet's skin or ear disease is contained in the oils and surface layers of the skin and ear canals. This evidence can be temporarily removed by bathing or rinsing, making accurate assessment of your pet's condition more difficult.

Your pet should be fasted before the dermatology appointment in case blood tests or sedation are required.

The courtesy of 24 hours notice is appreciated when canceling or rescheduling an appointment or a procedure. Please call 858-875-7500 to cancel or reschedule a procedure with our client services staff.

What Information Should I Bring to the Appointment?

The dermatologist will need to know what oral medications, over-the-counter medications, nutritional supplements, ear cleansers and drops, ointments, shampoos, and flea preventatives you have used for your pet recently. A detailed dietary history is also critical when evaluating a patient for possible food allergy, so please bring as much information as possible about your pet's food.

What Happens at the Appointment?

The dermatologist will examine your pet's skin and determine which diagnostic tests will be required. Some of these tests, such as cytology and skin scrapings, can be completed during your appointment. Your pet's treatment will be based in part on these results. **Cytology** samples may be taken from the surface of your pet's skin using a glass slide or acetate tape. This test can demonstrate the presence of infectious organisms, abnormal skin cells, or inflammatory cells. **Skin scrapings** are performed to detect ectoparasites, such as *Demodex* or *Sarcoptes* mites. Cytology and skin scrapings are typically repeated at recheck examinations to evaluate your pet's response to therapy. Hair samples, or **trichograms**, may also be obtained to detect abnormalities in hair structure or pigment deposition that can cause the hairs to break and to examine the root and tips of the hair.

For some patients, accurate diagnosis and therapy may require more extensive procedures, such as intradermal skin testing for environmental allergies, blood panels, microbial cultures, or biopsies. The necessary tests will be determined at your appointment, when the dermatologist has had an opportunity to examine your pet.

Intradermal skin test results are available at the end of the procedure. Blood results can take from 24 hours to 14 days, depending on the test. Biopsy results require 5 to 7 business days for pathologist

review. Cultures of infectious organisms may take up to 2 weeks for bacteria and up to 4 weeks for fungi. Holidays and weekends can extend waiting times for all laboratory work. As soon as results become available, a doctor or nurse will contact you.

Communication with your Regular Veterinarian

Your veterinarian will receive a copy of your pet's dermatologic examination, laboratory tests, diagnostic findings, and treatment plan. Veterinary Specialty Hospital strives to maintain open communication with you and your regular veterinarian.

Voicemails

Please be sure to leave numbers where you can be reached day and night, as well as mobile phone numbers. Voicemail messages may not be answered on days when the dermatologist and the dermatology nurse are not in the hospital. If you have an emergency or if you have a question that cannot wait until the dermatologist returns, please speak with our client services representative so they can direct your call to an area where you can be properly assisted.

Prescription Refills

Please call 858-875-7500, extension 207, for prescription refills. Requests for allergen refills should be made about 2 weeks before your pet runs out of allergen serum.