



What is Canine Annual wellness testing?

Wellness testing is a series of examinations and blood tests designed to identify early or hidden diseases in pets that seem healthy.

Why should I do Wellness testing on my dog?

Dogs are very good at hiding illness, and disease may exist even in healthy dogs. If a disease can be detected before a dog shows any symptoms, steps can be taken to manage or treat the problem before permanent damage occurs.

When is Annual wellness testing done?

Wellness testing should be performed regularly, often alongside your dog's annual veterinarian visit for a physical exam, vaccinations, and testing for heartworm and tick-borne diseases. Your veterinarian might suggest more frequent wellness check-ups and testing depending on your dog's age or health issues. Regular monitoring of your dog's health helps your veterinarian spot minor changes that could indicate the onset of a disease.

What is involved in Annual wellness testing?

The main categories of wellness testing for young and middle-aged dogs include complete blood count (CBC), biochemistry profile, urinalysis, thyroid hormone testing, 4Dx (heartworm and tick-borne disease screening) and fecal testing. Our veterinarians can advise you on how comprehensive the testing should be for your pet. In younger dogs without any health issues, simpler testing may be sufficient. For middle-aged dogs and those on long-term medications, more extensive testing may be recommended.

Complete Blood Count (CBC)

This test provides information about the different blood cell types. These include red blood cells, which carry oxygen to the tissues; white blood cells, which combat infection and respond to inflammation; and platelets, which assist in blood clotting. The CBC details the numbers, sizes, and shapes of various cell types and detects the presence of any abnormal cells. It is a routine test used at all stages of health and illness and can reveal the presence of many different diseases.

Biochemistry Profile

This panel of tests provides information about the body's organs and tissues and helps detect diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease, and other conditions. If minor abnormalities are found on the biochemistry profile, your veterinarian may suggest repeating the tests in a few weeks or months. If the abnormalities are more serious, a more comprehensive diagnostic workup may be recommended, including an expanded biochemistry profile and imaging tests such as radiography (X-rays) or ultrasound.

Urinalysis

Urinalysis is a routine test that reports a pet's urine's physical and chemical properties. It provides information on how well the kidneys are functioning and identifies inflammation and infection in the urinary system. It can also help detect diabetes and assist in diagnosing urinary system cancer. Urinalysis is part of a comprehensive assessment of the kidneys and urinary system and should be included in routine wellness testing. Wellness testing is a simple and effective way to monitor your dog's health.

Thyroid testing

The thyroid gland functions like a thermostat, regulating the whole-body metabolic rate. The most common thyroid disorder in dogs is hypothyroidism, which happens when the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone. Routine hormone testing is recommended for middle-aged and senior dogs. Even young dogs should be tested if they exhibit signs of hypothyroidism, such as unexplained weight gain, low energy, recurrent skin or ear infections, or hair loss on the body or tail.

4DX (Heartworm, Lyme, Anaplasmosis and other Tick-borne disease screening)

The 4DX screens for Heartworm, Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, and other tick-borne illnesses. Mosquito bites can transmit heartworm. The mosquito transfers the microscopic larva, which will grow into a 23 to 30-centimetre worm lodged in the heart. The more worms present, the more severe the impact on the heart. When left undiagnosed, they contribute to the spread of the disease. A bacterium transmitted by some ticks causes Lyme disease and anaplasmosis. Ticks can easily go unnoticed on medium- to long-haired or short-haired dogs if attached to a hidden skin spot. Dogs in wooded areas or tall grass are most at risk, but dogs with outdoor access can still become ill. We recommend that dogs be tested at least once a year. Dogs vaccinated against Lyme disease have a lower risk of contracting it, but they should be tested yearly. The same applies to dogs treated with tick prevention. Dogs that test positive for tick-borne disease may require further diagnostics to determine whether treatment is necessary.

Fecal Antigen Testing

Routine fecal antigen testing is essential for detecting intestinal parasites in pets. Infections can result from contaminated soil, contact with infected stool, transmission from mother to offspring, or ingestion of fleas. Common parasites include hookworms, roundworms, whipworms, flea tapeworms, and microscopic organisms like Giardia and Coccidia. These parasites can cause serious health issues in dogs and may be transmitted to humans. We recommend annual fecal antigen testing, even if your dog is on preventive treatment.

Intestinal worms usually stay within the host and shed microscopic eggs into the environment. Many monthly heartworm preventatives can help stop intestinal worms, but not all are effective against every type. Therefore, pets on regular heartworm preventatives and dewormers may still develop intestinal worms.

The impact of intestinal parasites depends on the parasite type and the dog's overall health. Symptoms may include diarrhea, blood in the stool, dull coat, weight loss, vomiting, and severe anemia. To protect your pet and family, we recommend yearly fecal antigen testing, following deworming guidelines, administering monthly preventatives, and regularly cleaning up your pet's stool.

Wellness testing is a straightforward and effective way to monitor your dog's health. Detecting and addressing medical issues early can help ensure your pet lives a long, healthy, and active life. If you're interested in having your pet undergo wellness testing, our qualified team is here to assist you. You will have the option to consent or choose not to participate.