



THE IMPORTANCE OF WELLNESS TESTING
Because they don't complain!

There are many qualities in our pets that we all admire. Their constant cheerfulness, loyalty, understanding, and amusing antics make them an important part of our lives. These behavioral traits have been selectively bred for over thousands of generations as pets have lived closely with their human companions.

An additional behavioral characteristic that we appreciate in both dogs and cats is their lack of complaining in sickness or in health, especially when compared to their human partners. This trait has developed over many generations as a desirable characteristic for two important reasons. First, ancestral species of dogs and cats were better able to survive in difficult environments if they showed relatively little effect of illness, thereby presenting a less noticeable and attainable target for their predators. Second, this lack of complaining is one of our pets most appreciated behavioral traits and one that has been strengthened through generations of selective breeding for temperament.

Unfortunately, when it comes to our wish to keep our pets as healthy as possible for as long as possible, *this inherent lack of complaining complicates our diagnostic abilities.* In many cases, a perfectly healthy acting pet can be unwell in some way without our noticing until the illness has progressed to a severe state in which the pet can no longer “pretend” to be well. We see this on a daily basis as chronically ill animals are brought to our office with owners reporting the pets had been “well” until very recently. Because pets are programmed to cover up all signs of illness, there was no way for these owners to know there was a problem at an earlier stage.

Over the last 5 years, we have found that *routine diagnostic laboratory wellness testing of senior pets and pre anesthetic testing of younger pets to be extremely beneficial in establishing normal values for individuals and discovering asymptomatic illness in seemingly healthy pets.* Through wellness testing we have been able to uncover and treat many common ailments including: bladder infections, bladder stones, kidney infection, kidney insufficiency, hormonal problems including thyroid disease, adrenal disease, diabetes, anemia, liver diseases, etc.

Based on this positive diagnostic experience, we now suggest the routine laboratory testing of pets at 2-3 year intervals until the age of 7-9, at which time annual Senior Screens are suggested. Working with our outside laboratory, we are able to offer relatively low cost packages of lab tests to make wellness testing affordable. The following is a list of our wellness testing packages with included tests and costs:

Young Adult Wellness Screen (Age 2-3 Years)	Complete Blood Count/Chemistry 11 Profile	\$66.00
Adult Wellness Screen (Age 4-7)	Complete Blood Count/Chemistry 11 Profile/ Urinalysis	\$90.00
Senior Screen (Over age 7)	Complete Blood Count/Chemistry 27 Profile/ Urinalysis/ Thyroid Level	\$115.00