



# What to Expect at a Sick Visit

## Coughing & Respiratory Concerns

Coughing, sneezing, or breathing changes can be worrying—and in some cases, contagious to other pets. Our goal during these visits is to keep **your pet safe**, provide thoughtful medical care, and **protect all patients in our hospital.**



**Squeaky says:** “Coughing is not fun. But it is treatable.”



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## Front Desk: Check-In & Immediate Isolation

When you arrive, our front desk team will:

- Check you and your pet in
- Confirm your contact information and pet's medical record
- Make sure we understand the reason for today's visit

### If your pet is coughing or has respiratory symptoms:

- Please alert the front desk immediately
- You will **not wait in the general lobby**
- A team member will escort you **directly to an isolation room**, or ask you to briefly wait in your car while the room is prepared

These steps help prevent the spread of contagious illness and keep all pets safe.

### **Squeaky says:**

“I avoid coughing pets. And most dogs. Safety first.”



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## Meet the Nurse: History & Initial Assessment

One of our veterinary nurses will meet you in the isolation room to:

- Take your pet's vital signs (weight, temperature, respiratory rate)
- Review symptoms such as:
  - Coughing or gagging
  - Sneezing or nasal discharge
  - Changes in breathing
  - Appetite or energy changes

- Ask about:
  - When the cough started and how it sounds
  - Exposure to other pets (daycare, boarding, grooming, dog parks)
  - Vaccination history
  - Recent illness at home

**Please let us know if your pet is anxious or not feeling well enough to tolerate handling.**

We move slowly, gently, and always prioritize comfort.

**Squeaky says:**

“I prefer not to be handled when I feel unwell. Boundaries are important.”



## Meet the Doctor: Assessing the Respiratory System

Your veterinarian will:

- Perform a focused physical exam, paying close attention to:
  - Lungs
  - Airway
  - Heart
  - Breathing effort
- Determine whether the cough appears:
  - Mild and stable
  - Concerning Urgent
- Discuss possible causes, such as:
  - Infectious respiratory disease
  - Allergies or irritation
  - Heart disease
  - Pneumonia or airway conditions

Not all coughs are the same—some resolve quickly, while others need closer monitoring.

**Squeaky says:**

“Not all hacks are snacks. Some need investigation.”



## Possible Diagnostics We May Recommend (and Why)

Based on your pet’s exam, we may recommend:

- **Chest X-rays:** To evaluate lungs, airway, and heart
- **Bloodwork:** To check for infection, inflammation, or other concerns
- **Respiratory testing:** When contagious illness is suspected
- **Heart testing:** If heart disease is a possibility

Diagnostics help us make choices based on facts—not guesses.

**Squeaky says:**

“Guessing is for laser pointers. Not medicine.”





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## Treatment, Home Care & Follow-Up

Treatment may include:

- Cough suppressants or antibiotics (when appropriate)
- Anti-inflammatory medications
- Supportive care
- Activity or environment adjustments

We'll review:

- How to give medications
- What improvement should look like
- When coughing is no longer considered normal
- When to call us or seek emergency care
- Any temporary at-home isolation recommendations

Some pets require recheck visits to ensure a full recovery.

**Squeaky says:**

“Taking meds = faster return to restful naps.”



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## Thank You for Helping Us Keep All Pets Safe

Extra precautions like isolation rooms help us care for coughing pets while protecting others in our hospital. We appreciate your understanding, cooperation, and trust.

**Squeaky says:**

“Healthy pets. Calm humans. Five-star visit.”



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## Payment Options

We strive to keep care accessible and transparent. Payment options include:

- Cash and major credit cards
- **CareCredit:** <https://www.carecredit.com>
- **Cherry Payment Plans:** <https://pay.withcherry.com/hoboken-vets-animal-clinic>

Our team is happy to answer questions about estimates and options.



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## Our Vision – and Your Feedback

Our vision is **a clinic where learning is constant, compassion is real, and integrity leads the way—making veterinary care clearer, kinder, and easier for every pet parent.**

If there's anything we can do to make your visit smoother or your pet more comfortable, please let us know. Your feedback helps us improve the care we provide.

Thank you for trusting us with your pet.

**Squeaky says:** “Feeling better is the goal. Treats are a bonus.”

