

Neurology: Frequently Asked Questions:

1) How do I know if my pet should see a neurologist?

We work closely with your regular veterinarian and together we can help you decide if a referral to a neurologist is indicated for your pet.

2) What types of pets do you treat?

Dogs, cats, ferrets, birds

3) Do I need to make an appointment? (How do I make an appointment?)

The neurology department sees appointments Mon-Thurs 9:30-5pm and Friday 8-12noon. To see the neurologist, please speak to your regular vet for a referral. Many neurological conditions can be very time sensitive and we are often able to schedule appointments to see you on the day that you call.

4) What do I do if my pet has an emergency after appointment hours?

AERA has an emergency staff available at night, weekends and holidays that will be able to see your patient if the neurology service is not available. Your pet can be transferred to the neurologist as soon as the department opens.

5) Should I feed my pet and give him his meds the day of an appointment?

We recommend that you do not feed your pet the day of his appointment. If your pet requires sedation for any diagnostics or procedures he will need to have an empty stomach. When scheduling an appointment, please inform the staff which medication your pet is currently taking. We can then advise you which medications can be taken the day of your appointment, and which ones to avoid.

6) Will my pet need to be sedated for the exam? For x-rays? For MRI?

Please do not sedate your pet prior to a neurological exam. We understand that some pets may be nervous, anxious, or sometimes aggressive when at the vet. We prefer to examine pets without prior sedation so we can thoroughly evaluate their current conditions. Our staff strives to minimize any pain, stress, or anxiety your pet may be feeling. For some diagnostic procedures such as x-rays we may discuss sedation with you if we think it would be appropriate for your pet.

An MRI does require general anesthesia. This is done by experienced nurses and a veterinarian with your pet's health as our number one priority.

7) If my pet needs an MRI, where is that done?

If your pet needs an MRI, this can be done at the Veterinary MRI and Radiotherapy Center of NJ (MRI link here). This is located in Clifton, a short distance from our facility. Our staff is available to transport your pet from our hospital to the MRI center and back if you are not available or if your pet requires special care.

8) Does my dog or cat need to stay overnight for an MRI?

No overnight stay is necessary unless your pet requires special care

9) Will my pet need to stay in the hospital?

The need for hospitalization depends on your pet's condition. Some conditions will be able to be treated on an outpatient basis while you wait. Certain conditions and procedures may require your pet to stay in the hospital.

10) If my pet is hospitalized, can I come and visit?

Visiting hours are between 12PM and 2PM on weekdays. In special circumstances, it may be possible to arrange visitation outside these hours but only after approval with the neurology department. We understand how important your pet is to you and would like to schedule visitations at time when the neurologist will be able to discuss your pet's progress with you.

11) Will he be alone at night or on the weekends?

At AERA your pet is never alone. Your pet will be monitored 24/7 by doctors and technicians.

12) If my pet requires an anesthetic procedure, how long does it take?

Your pet's health is our number one concern. We are happy to discuss with you all the details of any procedure your pet may require. It may be as short as a few minutes to an hour (for an MRI) and sometimes longer with certain neurosurgeries.

13) If my pet is prescribed medications, will he need to be on it his whole life?

Our goal is always to minimize the amount of medication your pet needs to control his clinical signs. Certain conditions may require long term medications, while other medications might be discontinued after a short period of time. It is always very important not to reduce the dosage or discontinue any medications without consulting with a veterinarian.

We are always happy to discuss any questions you may have regarding your pet's medications. We want to work closely with you to monitor your pet's progress and adjust their medications appropriately.

14) My pet was put on medication for seizures, but he hasn't had any seizures in a while, should I stop the meds?

Please do not stop any medications or reduce any dosages until you speak to a veterinarian. Most pets with seizure disorders will need to remain on medication to minimize the frequency and severity of the seizures. We will work with you to monitor your pet's progress and minimize the amount of medication needed.

15) I am worried that my pet might have a brain tumor. If he does, is euthanasia my only option?

No! We can offer your pet many treatment options. Some tumors may be able to be completely removed surgically. Other tumors may be treated with chemotherapy, radiation, or other medications. We strive to offer the best options to give your pet a good quality of life for as long as possible.

16) I was told that my pet's condition requires cage rest, what does that mean?

Many neurological conditions such as neck and back pain, traumas, and disc herniation, will require your pet to rest. For many conditions we recommend a crate or cage while your pet is recovering. This is the equivalent of a human on *bed-rest*. It is very important during this time that your pet does not have access to any furniture or stairs. Falling off the bed or couch, going up and down stairs, and even running around a small room can often cause significant injury to patients with these conditions. During these times is also important that your pet is never off leash when outside. While on crate rest we recommend that your pet only be allowed outside briefly on a leash to urinate and defecate, and then return to the crate. A harness is also recommended to avoid pulling on the neck. Walks and other physical activity should only be resumed when recommended by a veterinarian.

17) Will my pet need physical therapy?

Some pets may benefit from physical therapy. This should always be discussed with the veterinarian prior to any activity. Rehabilitation from various injuries and traumas must be done slowly, carefully, and with supervision.

18) Will my pet be able do his normal activities again, including running?

We are happy to discuss your individual pet's prognoses with you. Success for many conditions does include a return to normal activity.