



**Tabitha Kucera CCBC, RVT, KPA-CTP**

[Chirrupsandchatter.com](http://Chirrupsandchatter.com)

Chirrup and Chatter offers education lectures, workshops, and behavior consulting to shelters.

## HAPPY VET VISITS

How to decrease stress and advocate for your pet at the vet

### ANNUAL VET VISITS ARE VITAL IN KEEPING YOUR PET(S) HAPPY AND HEALTHY

Early detection and intervention allows your veterinary team to treat a disease in the beginning stages and then manage the condition with medication or simple lifestyle changes.

Veterinary visits and testing can help save your pet from pain, suffering, and disease. You can get any questions or concerns addressed and answered.

### Why is it important for your pet to see the vet?

- Pets are masters of hiding pain and illness
- Subtle changes can mean big problems
- Proactive care prevents and catches illness early
- Pets age more rapidly than humans
- Reduces your vet bills in the long run
- Builds a close relationship with your pet's veterinarian while your pet is still healthy so they can have a baseline of what is normal for your pet

### HOW TO DECREASE STRESS AT THE VET - LOW STRESS TRAVEL

**How to decrease stress at the vet for your pet**  
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- Bring items for them to eat off of (ice cream cones, long spoon, lickimats)
- Low Stress Travel: carrier training, classical music, secure carrier in the car
- Bring your pet's favorite treats, brush, or toy
- Advocate your pet  
Seek out Fear Free Certified Professionals
- Bring your pet's mat or their favorite bed
- Build relationship with a vet prior to illness
- Teach your pet cooperative care
- Don't rush  
Plan ahead

- Appropriate-sized take-apart carriers with easy entry and exit points
- Carrier training
- One cat per carrier
- Safe and comfortable resting area in the car (nonslip surface, secure crates/carriers to avoid slipping)
- Cool or warm the car to a comfortable temperature before placing your pet inside
- Play classical music
- Prevent car sickness
- Utilize calming aids (thundershirt, pheromones, nutraceuticals, etc)



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[Chirrupsandchatter.com/referral-partners](http://Chirrupsandchatter.com/referral-partners)

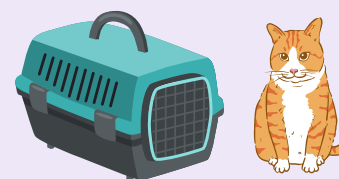
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## ADVOCATE FOR YOUR PET

- Be prepared with concerns/questions, pets symptoms (e.g., frequency)
- It can be helpful to keep a diary to track appetite, vomiting, bowel movements, etc.
- Share your observations with the vet
- Learn your pet's "normal" and pay attention to changes
- Know common symptoms of pain
- Every vet exam should include 2-3 short videos of your pet walking, playing, and eating. This allows the vet to see the animal's behavior in their home environment, assess gaits, and more
- If your pet has pain or another underlying medical issue, share with your veterinary professionals prior to them touching your pet
- Share your pet's triggers and sensitive areas
- Understand your animal's body language
- If your pet has a history of fear, anxiety, and stress with travel and/or veterinary procedures, talk to your vet about pre-visit pharmaceuticals and handling plans

## OTHER TIPS TO DECREASE STRESS

- Use considerate approach
- Schedule at quieter times (right before lunch, end of the day)
- Give your dog a bathroom break prior to leaving for the vet visit, entering the hospital
- Notify the vet hospital when you arrive to avoid a busy lobby (with possible triggers-dogs, scents, people, etc)
- Wait in the comfy car until the vet is ready and then go directly into the room
- Make car rides fun (not just to the vet) take to the park, fast food drive-thru, around the block )



Tabitha Kucera is an Elite Fear Free and Low-Stress Handling Certified RVT, VTS (Behavior), CCBC, and KPA-CTP. She enjoys helping people better understand and relate to animals. She offers individualized consulting to professionals and organizations on topics such as compassionate communication, understanding animal behavior, and implementing behavior programs. Tabitha also offers educational presentations and hands-on workshops.