

# What to expect

## SMALL ANIMAL EMERGENCY



52 Campus Drive, Saskatoon SK S7N 5B4

Small Animal Clinic  
306-966-7126

Large Animal Clinic  
306-966-7178

### About the VMC

Welcome to the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre (VMC), the veterinary referral centre for all of Western Canada and the teaching hospital for future veterinarians and veterinary specialists.

Our clinical team includes board-certified veterinary specialists, clinical associates and registered veterinary technologists, as well as veterinary specialists in training (residents), clinical interns and senior veterinary students. We look forward to caring for your animal and meeting you in person.

### Before Your Visit

To prepare for your visit to the VMC, please visit us online:

[vmc.usask.ca/about/new-client.php](http://vmc.usask.ca/about/new-client.php)

You will find more information about finding our location, parking, hours of operation and the Small Animal Clinic reception area.

The WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre (VMC) is staffed with a veterinarian — 24 hours a day, seven days a week — for emergencies whether they are pre-booked or on a walk-in basis.

If you need to bring your pet to the VMC emergency service during the following times, please call in advance so we can prepare for your arrival:

- 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday to Friday
- 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday, Sunday and statutory holidays

Outside of these hours, clients will not be able to contact a VMC representative by telephone since the hospital uses an automated call service. Instead, please bring your pet directly to the VMC. If you are coming from a referring veterinary clinic or if you have recently visited another clinic, please ask your veterinarian to complete one of the VMC's online referral forms so we have your pet's most recent diagnostic test results. Your referring veterinarian can also contact our clinical team by telephone and give them more information about your pet.

### What to Expect

While the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre (VMC) shares many similarities to other veterinary hospitals, there are some differences that may have an impact on your appointment.

- The VMC is a teaching hospital for WCVM veterinary students and for students enrolled in the veterinary technology program at the Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Please note that teaching takes additional time. Students participate in all aspects of examining and treating our patients under the immediate supervision of licensed veterinarians or board-certified veterinary specialists. While teaching is essential to our facility, the well-being of our patients is the highest priority for VMC clinical teams.
- Given the complexity of referral cases, we often need to order additional diagnostic testing or consult with others about diagnoses and treatment plans for patients. If you are travelling from out of town, please be prepared to stay two days in Saskatoon with your pet. In some cases, your stay may need to be longer. During your appointment, we will give you an estimate of the length of time it may take for additional tests and consultation.



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[www.usask.ca/wcvm](http://www.usask.ca/wcvm)

## Payment

If your animal is not hospitalized, the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre requires full payment at the time of service.

If your animal is hospitalized, half of the estimated cost is due prior to services being provided. Final payment is due at the time of discharge.

Occasionally, the hospital will mail statements to you after discharge for additional tests that were approved by you and for charges not included on the initial invoice at discharge.

The WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre accepts the following payment methods:

- cash
- credit card (Visa and MasterCard)
- debit card (Interac)

**Personal cheques are not accepted.**

If you have questions about payment, call the administration office at 306-966-7103, or visit [vmc.usask.ca/about/payment.php](http://vmc.usask.ca/about/payment.php).

## For more information

**Small Animal Clinic**  
306-966-7126  
[vmccorrespond@usask.ca](mailto:vmccorrespond@usask.ca)

## What to Expect, continued . . .

- If the nature of your pet's condition is not of a truly urgent manner, you have the option to schedule an appointment with your primary veterinarian or the VMC for a future date, saving yourself the increased wait time and cost associated with bringing your pet through the emergency service. This allows more time and the appropriate environment to fully address your pet's needs. It also enables our emergency team to focus our full attention on appropriately treating more critical emergencies.

## General Steps

Here's a general overview of your pet's visit to the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre for an emergency:

- A registered veterinary technologist (RVT) or a senior veterinary student will conduct an initial assessment of your pet to determine if your companion animal is in stable condition. The VMC team member may take your pet to the intensive care unit (ICU) for immediate care or ask you to wait with your pet in the Small Animal Clinic reception area. Like a human hospital's emergency room, we must "triage" or prioritize our patients based on the severity of their illnesses. If your pet is stable, there may be a longer wait for care while we attend to more seriously ill patients.
- A senior veterinary student or veterinarian will meet you at the Small Animal Clinic reception and bring you and your pet to an examination room. The VMC team member will ask questions about your pet's medical history and then perform an initial physical assessment. Depending on your pet's medical emergency, it may be easier to perform a complete physical examination with some additional assistance. The VMC team member may ask to take your pet to the clinic's treatment room for examination by other clinical team members.
- If your pet isn't taken to the treatment room, you will both be left alone in the examination room or asked to return to the reception area while we discuss your pet's health issues. Depending on the number of current emergency cases, you may need to wait — but we will keep you informed about the estimated wait time.
- The veterinarian and senior veterinary student will return to discuss the initial assessment and provide you with the team's diagnostic recommendations. They may suggest additional diagnostic tests

### General Steps, continued . . .

such as a blood test, radiographs (X-rays), an ultrasound examination or additional advanced imaging such as computed tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

- **Please note:** When you bring your pet in to the VMC emergency services, it may not be possible to perform certain tests or procedures on the same day or during the weekend. As well, some of these tests (such as an MRI scan) can't be performed outside of normal business hours. This may mean hospitalizing your pet overnight or during a weekend so the tests or procedures can be performed early in the following week. In addition, results from diagnostic tests may not be available until the next day. If your pet isn't hospitalized, we will call you to report those test results.
- There are many reasons why owners bring their pets to the VMC's emergency service. In some cases, we can provide immediate treatment to an animal; in other cases, a pet may need additional management by another specialty service — such as medicine or surgery — in the VMC. If that's the case with your pet, we will transfer your companion animal to the recommended specialty service on the next business day.
- If your pet doesn't need to be hospitalized, we may still recommend that you arrange a follow-up appointment with another VMC clinical specialty service. We request that you call the VMC to schedule that appointment within the time frame discussed with our clinical team during the visit.