

# What to expect

## EQUINE RESPIRATORY EXAMINATION (WORK-UP)



52 Campus Drive, Saskatoon SK S7N 5B4

Small Animal Clinic | Large Animal Clinic  
306-966-7126 | 306-966-7178

### About the VMC

Welcome to the WCV 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 Large Animal Clinic reception area.

### What to Expect

While the WCV 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 WCV 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 and 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 animal. 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.

### General Steps

In most cases, a horse showing clinical signs of coughing, nasal discharge, increased breathing or decreased performance will be admitted to the WCV Veterinary Medical Centre's general hospital. However, if the attending veterinarian suspects an infectious disease such as strangles, we will take your horse to our equine isolation facility.

A typical appointment for a respiratory examination (work-up) will include the following steps:

- A senior veterinary student or a large animal internal medicine house officer (clinical interns or residents who are licensed veterinarians) will meet you at the Large Animal Clinic reception. A veterinary technologist will help you unload your horse.
- A senior veterinary student and a house officer will take a complete medical history and then conduct a physical examination with the assistance of a veterinary technologist.



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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

**Large Animal Clinic**  
306-966-7178  
[vmccorrespond@usask.ca](mailto:vmccorrespond@usask.ca)

## General Steps, continued . . .

- Your horse will be weighed and sedated in stocks for further examination. You are welcome to stay, wait at reception or leave the hospital. We will call you when we are ready to discuss findings and recommendations and answer your questions.
- The procedures usually last about 40 to 60 minutes. Your horse will need another 30 to 40 minutes to completely recover from sedation and be fit for transportation. Overall, please expect your appointment to take a minimum of two to three hours.
- The diagnostic work-up usually includes:

### Upper airway endoscopy

- Clinicians will view the horse's nasal passages, guttural pouches (wind sacks) and the wind pipe
- Clinicians will take diagnostic samples during this procedure. Routine tests include cytology (examination of the cells to identify and characterize an inflammatory process) and bacteriology (isolation and identification of microorganisms such as bacteria which may cause infection). Test results are usually available within one to three working days.

### Broncho-alveolar lavage (BAL)

- Clinicians will pass a small rubber tube into the lungs of your horse and retrieve a wash sample for cytology. Results are usually available within one to three working days.

### Thoracic ultrasound

- This test allows us to assess the surface of the horse's lungs. Although the internal medicine team will perform most ultrasound examinations, consultation with our radiologists may be necessary. Results are usually available on the same day.

### Thoracic radiographs

- Thoracic radiograph images allow us to assess the deeper lung structures and complement the ultrasound images. Most often, it's necessary for a radiologist to interpret the images. Results are usually available within one to two working days.
- We will let you know when your horse is ready to be discharged. Your bill must be paid in full before discharging your horse.
  - Diagnostic test results are usually available within one to three working days. Where possible, our clinicians will make management and treatment recommendations at the time of discharge. In most cases, we have to wait until we have received all diagnostic test results.