

# Why is my first consultation so long and what can I expect from revisit appointments?

The first consultation is all about meeting you and your pet, collecting a thorough history about your pets' behaviour and gaining an understanding of your situation and your goals for your pet. This all helps to make an accurate diagnosis that we can then formulate a specific treatment plan for.

There is generally not one quick fix for a behavioural problem. Treatment will often involve a combination of behaviour modification techniques, environmental management and medication. Behavioural problems have generally taken time to develop and thus will also take time to improve, just like the treatment for mental health problems in people. On average a behavioural problem may take up to two years to be well managed.

A revisit consultation is generally booked for six weeks after your initial behaviour consultation to monitor progress and adjust the treatment plan. This consultation is usually half an hour long. After this time, consultations are usually booked on an as needs basis and are charged at a reduced rate.



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# Behaviour Problems



# Behaviour problems in pets

Having a pet with a behavioural problem can be distressing and leave you feeling helpless in knowing how to help them and improve the situation.

Unfortunately, many pet owners feel this way. Behavioural problems are still a leading cause of relinquishment and euthanasia of pets in Australia.

However, it doesn't have to be this way. Behavioural medicine takes an evidence-based approach to diagnosing and treating behavioural and mental health problems in pets.

Mental health can be closely linked to physical health. That is why you should see a vet first if you have any concerns about your pets behaviour to ensure we have ruled out medical causes for your pets behaviour.



## Who needs a behaviour consultation?

**If your pet is showing any of the following behaviours they may benefit from a behaviour consultation:**

- + Fears and phobias
- + Anxiety Disorders
- + Separation distress
- + Aggression
- + Repetitive and compulsive behaviours
- + Noise sensitivities (eg. thunderstorm phobia, fireworks)
- + Learning problems
- + House soiling and elimination issues
- + Nuisance behaviours (eg. Excessive barking, destructive behaviours, jumping)
- + Age related behaviour changes- cognitive decline (dementia)

## What is included in an initial behaviour consultation?

- + An initial behaviour consultation takes approximately one hour. In some cases, the length of consultation can be tailored to your needs and the cost will reflect this.
- + You will be asked to complete a questionnaire on your pets' behaviour and we ask that this is returned to the clinic prior to your consultation.
- + After your consultation you will receive a comprehensive report outlining the initial plans for your pet's treatment.
- + You will also receive an email address for communicating with your vet during your treatment.
- + If you have been referred from another vet, your regular vet will also receive the history from the consultation and a copy of the report so they are aware of the treatment plan going forward.

## What is not included in the behaviour consult cost?

- + The cost of medications that may be prescribed will be additional to the consult cost.
- + A blood test may be recommended to assess for any physical health problems that may be contributing to your pets behaviour. This cost of this will depend on the blood profile recommended and can be arranged at another time or through your regular vet.

### What if my pet is a Best Mate?

If your pet is a Best Mate you will receive a discount on the cost of your consultations as well as any medications, or blood tests required.

## Who is Dr. Ash?

Dr. Ashleigh Hargreaves is a qualified veterinarian who has also completed further post graduate studies in Veterinary behaviour medicine and is a member of the Australian New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists in Veterinary Behaviour. Ash is also a Fear Free Certified Practitioner. Ash is passionate about behaviour and mental health in pets and improving the quality of life of pets and their humans.

