

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF THE SMALL ANIMAL PATIENT

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IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EXAM



- Most important diagnostic tool
- No special equipment required
- Every patient is unique
- Can reveal a wide array of information

GENERAL APPROACH TO PHYSICAL EXAM

- Systematic/repeatable approach
 - Nose to tail
 - Tail to nose
 - Body Systems
- Approach the patient & each system from macro to micro
- Eyes & hands first **THEN** instruments (stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, otoscope, etc.)
- Perform complete exam **THEN** focus on problem(s)
 - DON'T MISS THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

BODY



- Attitude/Mentation
- Body Condition/Weight
- Gait
- Smell/Odor
- Haircoat



HEAD

- Entire head first for muscle symmetry
- Eyes
 - Symmetry/Position, 3rd eyelid, Discharge, Blepharospasm, full blink, cornea, lens, pupil size, PLR, fundic exam
- Ears
 - Position/stance, odor, moisture, characterize debris, vertical canal, horizontal canal, tympanic membrane
- Nose
 - Symmetry, airflow, nares size, characterize discharge

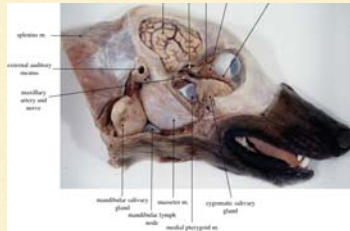
HEAD



- Mouth
 - Teeth
 - Dog: I=3/3, C=1/1, PM=4/4, M=2/3
 - Cat: I=3/3, C=1/1, PM=3/2, M=1/1
 - MM/CRT
 - Tartar
 - Gingiva
 - Halitosis
 - Masses
 - Fistulas

NECK

- Mandibular & prescapular LN
- Mandibular salivary gland
- Thyroid slip/enlargement
- Tracheal palpation
- Neck ROM



THORAX

- Characterize chest excursions (tachypnea, apnea, paradoxical)
- Axillary lymph nodes
- Respiratory Auscultation
 - Resting Dog Rate: 10-30 breaths/min
 - Resting Cat Rate: 20-40 breaths/min
 - Listen to all fields: crackles, wheezes, referred, dull/absence

THORAX

- Cardiac Auscultation
 - Resting Dog Rate: 60-160 beats/min
 - Resting Cat Rate: 120-220 beats/min
 - Left & Right (Parasternal in cats)
 - Base & Apex
 - Murmur, arrhythmia, gallop
 - Palpate pulse for synchrony & synchrony

THORAX



- Point of Maximal Intensity
 - Pulmonic - 3rd intercostal space left side
 - Aortic - 4th intercostal space left side
 - Mitral - 5th intercostal space left side
 - Tricuspid - 4th intercostal space right side

THORAX

- Murmur Grades
 - Grade I - Skilled listener needs several minutes in quiet room
 - Grade II - Quiet focal murmur takes some effort to hear
 - Grade III - Moderate intensity murmur heard in more than one location
 - Grade IV - Loud murmur heard anywhere on thorax with no palpable thrill
 - Grade V - Loud murmur heard anywhere on thorax with a palpable thrill
 - Grade VI - Very loud murmur heard anywhere on thorax with thrill & audible with stethoscope off chest

ABDOMEN

- Gross appearance: tucked, lordosis/kyphosis, pot-bellied, etc
- Skin
- Masses
- Abdominal effusion
- Back Pain: Thoracolumbar, Lumbosacral

ABDOMINAL PALPATION

- Mammary glands
- Liver margins/Spleen
- Intestinal loops
- Kidneys (cats)
- Urinary bladder
- Inguinal lymph nodes
- Foreign Body/Masses

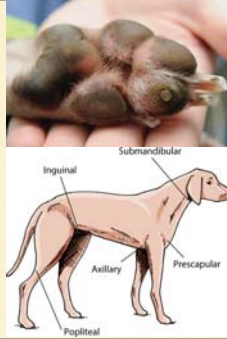
ABDOMEN



- Prepuce
- Penis
- Scrotum/Testicles
- Vulva

EXTREMITIES

- Range of motion
- Bony proliferation/masses
- Crepitus of joints
- Joint effusion
- Pain
- Between toes & pads
- Popliteal lymph nodes



TAIL/PERIANAL REGION

- Tailhead for ectoparasites
- Tail
 - Pain, limber, range of motion, carriage (mentality)
- Anus
 - Anal tone, intestinal parasites, irritation, diarrhea
- Perineal Region
 - Hernias, anal gland abscess/sacculitis, fecal staining, urine staining

RECTUM



- Anal glands
 - Express, masses, pain
- Prostate
 - Size, symmetry, pain
- Urethra
 - Size, stones, pain
- Pelvis
 - Symmetry, fractures, pain
- Sacrum
 - Symmetry, back pain

OTHER EXAM TYPES

- Orthopedic Exam
- Neurologic Exam
- Ocular Exam
- Oral Exam
- Reproductive Exam

DOCUMENTATION



- WRITE IT DOWN OR IT DIDN'T HAPPEN!!!
- Observe trends (TPR weight, etc)
- Use body maps & calipers for masses