



VETERINARY TEACHING HOSPITAL  
ATLANTIC VETERINARY COLLEGE

***Policies for Veterinary Behavioural Medicine Consults and Informed Consent  
Statement - Dogs***

The following are the policies for veterinary behavioural medicine consults:

1. If your dog is fearful, aggressive, or worried in new places, when meeting new people, or when meeting other dogs or cats, please leave the dog in the car when you arrive. You are coming to my home where your dogs will learn dogs are happy, but your dog will do best if we have a customized plan. The quiet and space will be beneficial, but we will start with the dog on a lead.
2. If you think it will help, you are welcome to bring a crate or bed for your dog. We know that some dogs view crates as safe areas. We also have dog beds available.
3. The appointment will start with your dog on a lead. Further management of all interactions with humans and/or other animals is at our discretion so that we keep everyone as safe as possible and distress the dog as little as possible.
4. You will receive a detailed set of discharges that discuss your dog's diagnosis and potential treatment plans. Because of the amount of time it takes to write these discharges you do *not* generally receive them the day of your appointment. They will be sent by email within a few days of your appointment, and we expect people to have questions. Meanwhile, we will provide handouts and/or links to handouts that explain the diagnosis and/or treatment options, and/or instructions for behavioural exercises either at the time of the appointment or via email. Most, but not all of these will come from Dr. Overall's DVD, *Humane Behavioural Care for Dogs: Problem Prevention and Treatment* (Elsevier) which is available from Amazon.com and elsewhere. This DVD also has a video with dogs demonstrating all of the behaviour mod programs and concerns that could arise during them, and we recommend that you buy it. It's available from Elsevier and from Amazon.com.
5. Treatment plans are always multi-modal, and we often use medication to facilitate learning as we engage in behavioural modification and environment change. We often recommend more humane or effective tools to help manage your dog or even just to walk him or her. These will be explained and/or demonstrated and sources provided, if this is not a product stocked by AVC. Please note that most of the medications we use do not have a veterinary license and so are used "extra" or "off-label". This is both legal and safe, and we will explain in detail any concerns that could arise during your appointment.
6. By completing these forms and signing below you give permission to evaluate, assess, formulate a treatment plan and treat your dog. You will receive a written copy of the discharge instructions and treatment plan. You should ask questions at any time. Compliance with instructions is an

essential aspect of treatment.

7. The evaluation, assessment and treatment plan do not represent a guarantee of successful treatment. Few behavioural problems are truly cured and responsible management is a factor for every patient. That said, dogs whose people strive to humanely meet their needs generally improve greatly, regardless of their problem.
8. Finally, if your dog is aggressive, you should know the following.
  - Any animal who is aggressive for any reason can do serious damage and harm.
  - Special precautions must be taken to ensure that everyone is safe when interacting with these dogs. These precautions may include some form of confinement (e.g., gates, crates) or the use of leads, harnesses, head collars and/or muzzles.
  - Proof of current rabies vaccination, where required by law, should accompany your completed history forms.
  - Seeking treatment for a behavioural problem and/or treating a behavioural problem is not a substitute for adherence to local laws.
  - Owning a dog carries with it responsibilities, including responsibility/potential liability for any damage the dog and/or cat does to people or property. This responsibility is not changed/transferred by seeking behavioural help.
  - Problems involving pathological behaviours, including aggression, are never cured *but they can be well treated and managed*. Failure to do so may lead to euthanasia. Even as an exceptional last resort, *the death of a dog is an outcome that everyone would seek to avoid* if possible. ***The point of this appointment is to provide humane care that allows your dog to live a long and happy life.***

### ***Informed consent***

By signing this form you give permission for your dog to be evaluated, diagnosed and for the development of a treatment plan. Any videos/photos used or taken in the course of evaluation/treatment may be used anonymously in teaching and/or research.

Name of person responsible for the dog : \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_