

FEAR FREE TALK: CHANGE IS POSSIBLE....

It Begins with You. Change is Necessary to Better Pets and Those who Love Them

Presented by Steve Dale, CABC

There no data to support this, but I personally believe – based on visual cues, and other physical cues – such as defecating, screaming, loss of hair – and forcing the flight or fight response, many pets in veterinary clinics think (at some level), they are going to die. Even if they're not thinking that, their bodies are.

Adrenaline, Cortisol, Norepinephrine: The Three Major Stress Hormones: ¹

“Adrenaline is a hormone produced in the medulla of the adrenal glands, from where it is released into the bloodstream. It has many different actions depending on the type of cells it is acting upon. However, the overall effect of adrenaline is to prepare the body for the ‘fight or flight’ response in times of stress, ie, for vigorous and/or sudden action. Key actions of adrenaline include increasing the heart rate, increasing blood pressure, expanding the air passages of the lungs, enlarging the pupil in the eye (see figure), redistributing blood to the muscles and altering the body’s metabolism, so as to maximise blood glucose levels (primarily for the brain). A closely related hormone, noradrenaline, is released mainly from the nerve endings of the sympathetic nervous system (as well as in relatively small amounts from the adrenal medulla). There is a continuous low level of activity of the sympathetic nervous system resulting in release of noradrenaline into the circulation, but adrenaline release is only increased at times of acute stress.

Stress also stimulates the release of adrenocorticotrophic hormone from the pituitary gland which promotes the production of the steroid hormone cortisol from the cortex of the adrenal glands. This steroid hormone is more important in altering the body’s metabolism (ie, raising plasma glucose) under conditions of longer-term, ongoing (chronic), rather than acute stress.”

When our fight or flight response is activated, sequences of nerve cell firing occur and chemicals like adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol are released into our bloodstream. These patterns of nerve cell firing and chemical release cause a series of very dramatic changes, respiratory rate increases, blood is shunted away from digestive tract and directed into muscles and limbs, which require extra energy and fuel for running and fighting. Also, pupils dilate. Awareness intensifies. Eyesight sharpens. Impulses quicken. Perception of pain diminishes. Immune system mobilizes with increased activation. As all this is preparation—physically and psychologically—for fight or flight. Common now is scanning and searching environment, "looking for the enemy."

When the fight or flight system is activated, everything in the environment is perceived as a possible threat to survival. By its very nature, the fight or flight system bypasses rational mind—where well thought out beliefs exist—and moves the animal into "attack" mode if that is defense. This state of alert causes the perception that almost everything is a possible threat to survival.

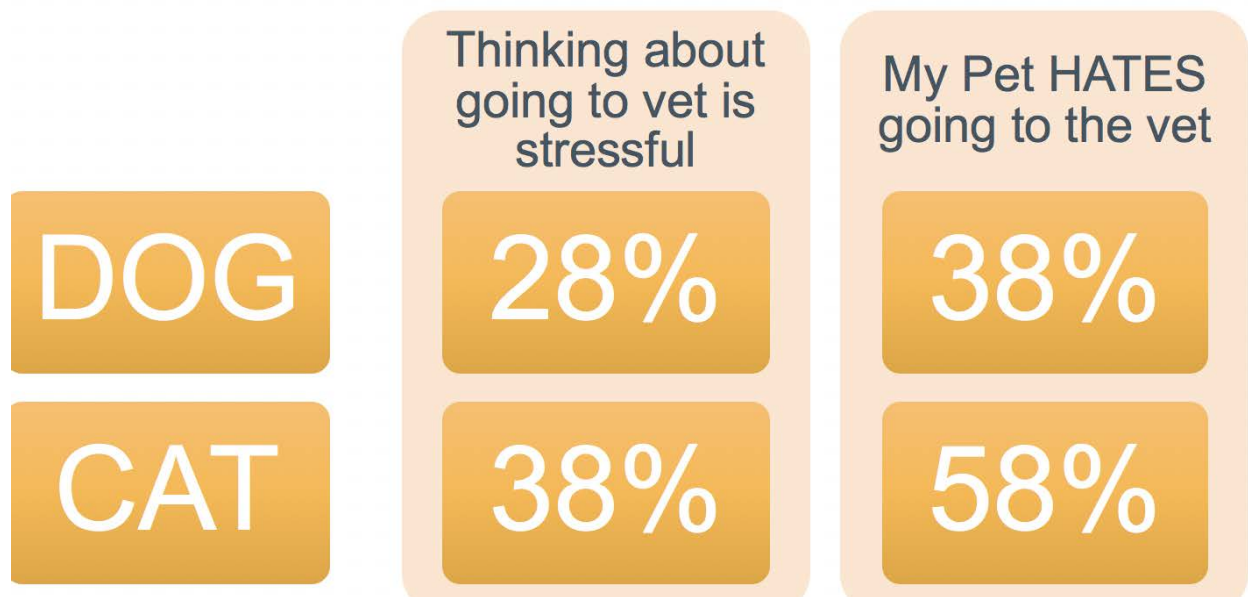
Rational thoughts are disengaged, and so may be prior learning, or the ability to learn as the threat continues.

“From these experiences, dogs can easily learn that the offense is their best defense and they should attack when fearful rather than to flee or freeze,”²

Stress that leads to the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical (HPA) cascade increase with repeated incidents.³

“I do believe that at some level it is likely many animals in veterinary clinics do respond as if they are going to die.”⁴

Going to the veterinarian:⁵



43% agreed that their veterinarian communicates using language they understand

46% agreed that their veterinarian clearly explains when they should bring their pet in for various procedures or tests.⁶

83% of cats see a veterinarian during first year of ownership.⁶

Most cats don't see a veterinarian in a given year⁶

Going to the veterinarian is not something pet owners or pets apparently enjoy⁵

What cat owners think: ^{5,6}

- 81% believe cats are so self-sufficient, they don't require vet care
- 33% of indoor cat owners say their cats don't require vet care
- Most can't recognize subtle signs of illness in their own cats
- Most cat owners don't think cats need more vet care as thy cats age
- Cat owners are comfortable with longer periods between exams.

(71%) of veterinary professionals surveyed have cats living in their home, but more than a third of them do not bring their cats in for an annual wellness exam. ⁷

So why are visits down: ^{5,6,8}

Sticker Shock

Understanding need for preventive care

Dr. Google

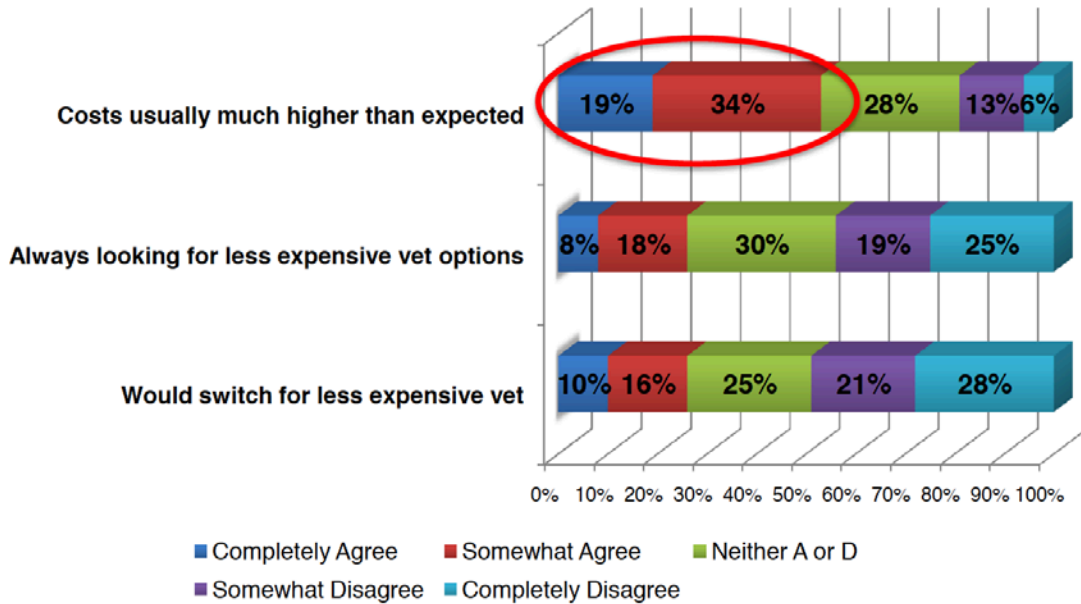
Where's the value

Transport

Marketing challenging, in increasingly competitive market place

Fear Anxiety Stress associated with visits

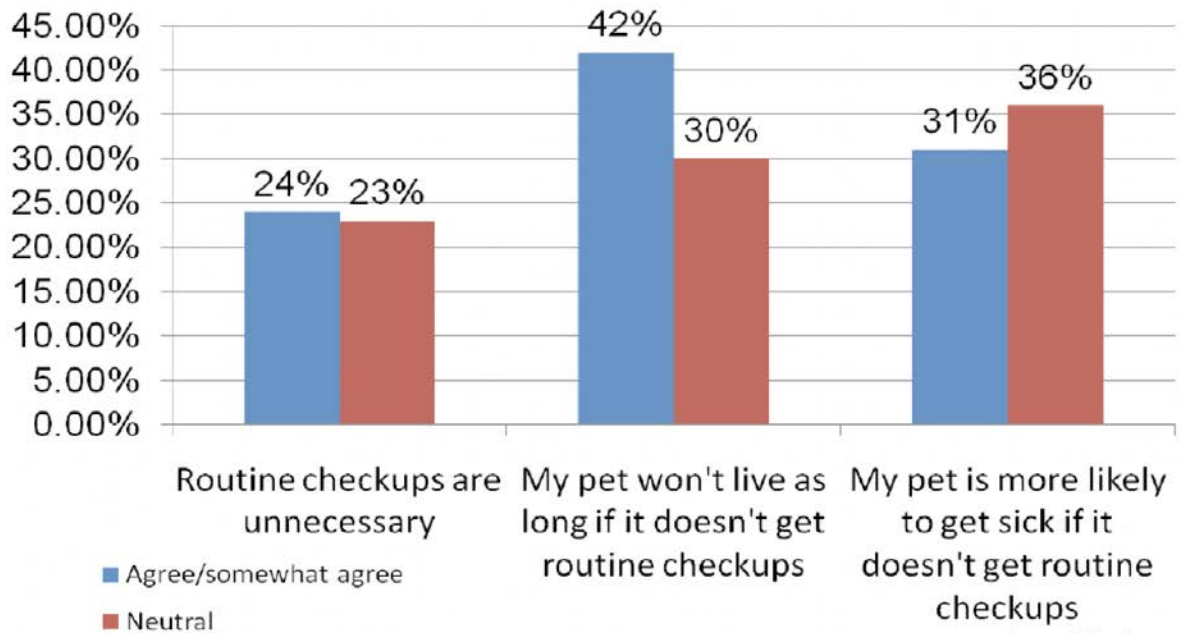
Cost Perceptions



Bayer Veterinary Care Usage Study

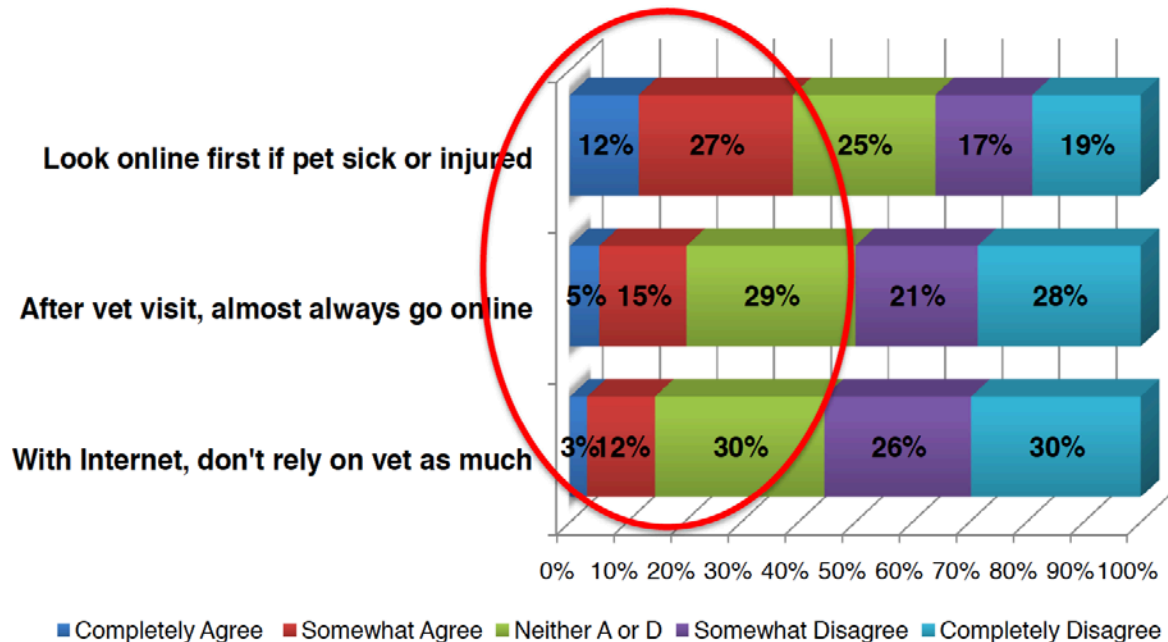
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Preventive care/Check Ups – Not caught on



Bayer Veterinary Care U

Impact of Internet Information



Bayer Veterinary Care Usage Study

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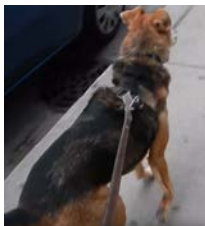
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Bayer HealthCare
Animal Health

Benefits to Hospitals: ⁸

- Pet owners tell us taking their pets to the veterinarian is too stressful for them and their pets
 - Fear Freesm spaces and care will diminishes FAS, helps owners embrace veterinary care for their pets
 - Decreased conflict with patients helps create a new harmony within the veterinary team
 - Behavior is medicine. Fear Freesm is better medicine
- “Ethel and Hazel Go to the Veterinarian,” ⁹



Pre-Pet Counseling ¹⁰

- Source of income for technician
- Bonds clients
- Helps people to make right choices
- Helps people make right choices about where TO get pets

Early kitten and puppy visits ^{11,12}

Importance of puppy classes. ^{13,14,15,16, 20}

- In Clinic:
- You control training techniques and answers to question
- YOU are a resource
- Bonds pup and client to clinic
- Technician (veterinary nurse) income
- Something to talk about in social
- Outside classes:
- Please audit
- Pay attention to what clients say about facility
- Positive reinforcement training

Kitten Socialization Classes: ^{16,17,18,19,20}

- In clinic:
- You control training techniques and answers to question
- YOU are a resource
- Bonds pup and client to clinic
- Technician (veterinary nurse) income
- PR possibility
- Something to talk about in social
- Challenges:
- Kittens, 8 to 15 wks.
- Market

- To start off, must be vet checked
- Desensitized to carrier
- Desensitized to travel, the world
- Desensitized to strange people, strange species (dogs)
- Learn about proper care, brushing teeth, clipping nails
- Prevent behavior problems BEFORE they occur
- Understand what is normal – what really is behavioral – even then, call the vet
- Cats can be trained

Potential curriculum week 1

- Introduction/Handouts
- Video
- Keep them inside – environmental enrichment
- Pass the kitty
- Leash and harness - how cats can be safe outdoors
- Kitty play session
- Demo of nail clipping
- Brushing cat demo
- Clicker training explanation/demo
- Pass the kitty (at vet office in exam room)
- Kitty play session
- Questions

Week 2

- Clicker show'n tell
- Leash and Harness show'n tell
- How to play with cats
- Kitty play session
- Who let the dogs in
- Litter box 101
- Pass the kitty
- Scratching posts talk and demo
- Tooth brushing demo
- Pilling demo
- Feeding cats
- Pass the kitty
- Kitten play session (at vet office in exam room)
- Questions

Importance of Pass the Kitten ²¹

Messaging regarding declaw ^{22,23}

Simon's Cat Carrier ²⁴

Carrier Training - it can be accomplished ^{25,26,27,28}

- 1) PMA, encouragement from clinic
- 2) Tools (Feliway, etc)
- 3) Comprehend Training; Advice/Guidance from Technician
- 4) Help from various videos, handouts

Getting the pets to see you – travel ²⁹

Training enhances the human-animal bond ^{30,31,32}

Here's Why You Need to Play Social:

- Reality check: You're just not living in today's world
- Your competitors are
- You could be using it to build your business and your brand, and help pets, a missed opportunity
- You CAN control your messaging
- *"Word of Mouth is the Best Form of Advertising,"* unknown, 1400's
- THAT'S WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA IS!

Social Media Rule of Three's:

- Self-Promotion (ex: *"This week, introduce a new client and you receive 30% off an exam, or 10% off dentals in February."*)
- Useful content from you (ex: *"Here are my tips on nuisance barking"*)
- Useful content from (credible) others (ex: *"Here's an AAHA video on home dental care"*)

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