



## Getting to Know Your Pet

When having a pet its very important to get familiar with his/her normal health, behaviour and appearance (coat shine, clear eyes, etc). There are a few points which you can keep note of with your pet, if you are concerned at all.



### 1/ Mucous Membranes

Mucous Membranes are the gums and the inner lips of your pet. Gently lift the upper lip of your pet, and look at the colour of its gums and inside lip. In dark pigmented animals sometimes the colour of the mucous membranes may be difficult to assess, however a small area of slightly lighter pigment can usually be found. To know your pets normal texture, pick his/her lips up and stroke them.

### 2/ Capillary Refill Time (CRT)

Once you have assessed the "colour" of your pet, press firmly with your index finger on the gum, quickly remove your finger and count the amount of seconds it takes to return to its normal colour(Pink), in the area pressed. This should take 1 - 2 seconds, this shows how well your pets peripheral blood is circulating.

### 3/ Breathing

It is s very important to get to know your pets breathing, sit and watch him/her when: resting, sleeping and after exercise. When watching your pet breath observe how much he/she may take a breath per minute, also watch the abdomen whilst breathing on how much it rises and falls.

### 4/ Pulse

The pulse of your pet (cat/dog) can be found in the inside of the hind leg. This pulse is known as the Femoral Pulse. Get to know where the pulse is and feel how strong it is at rest, before and after exercise.

Detecting the pulse: · Place forefinger inside the upper thigh. · Apply gentle but firm pressure, move finger until you feel the pulse. · Count how many times you feel the beat over a minute.

### 5/ Walking and Playing

Very important to always watch and observe the way your pet walks and plays. This helps notice if he/she is carrying any injuries or lameness.

### 6/General Appearance of your pet

As you are getting very familiar with your pet, the appearance and behaviour comes in very important in helping establish if there are any problems, things to keep an eye on are:

- coat appearance (shining , healthy, non smelly)
- eating habits (has become picky, drooling, coughing etc)
- exercise habits ( lazier, hyper, breathing, coughing etc.)
- drinking ( how much and how often)
- urination and defecation (how often, colour, smell)

