



Nutrition

THE 5TH VITAL ASSESSMENT

Helpful communication tips

Because of the extensive involvement of the client in the daily dietary management of their pets, client communication and rapport is vital. Here are some helpful communication tips and questions to ensure your clients get the right information every time they visit:

Assess the patient.

EXPLORE THE PET'S NUTRITION AND FEEDING REGIMEN

- On a normal day, what does [pet's name] eat? Please include any treats or people food.
- Have there been any changes to what [pet's name] has been eating recently?
- Has [pet's name] had any problems with his or her current food? With previous food?
- Are there foods that [pet's name] does not like? Can you tell me more?

Get a handle on the client's perspective.

EXPLORE THE CLIENT'S IDEAS AND BELIEFS

- How is [pet's name] current food working for you? Do you have any concerns about the food?

EXPLORE THE CLIENT'S EXPECTATIONS

- What is important to you when selecting your pet's food?
- You mentioned you are looking for what is best for [pet's name]; can you tell me a little more about what you mean when you say "best?"



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Select a food.

Make a specific nutrition recommendation.

- We both want what is best for [pet's name]. Based on the information you shared with me earlier, and my experience and the research in this area, I believe [food name and form (canned and/or dry)] will be of the greatest benefit to [pet's name] and his/her long-term health and well-being because ...

Be sure to tell the client why you are making this particular recommendation.

Conclude your discussion of nutrition by returning to the client's perspective.

- What concerns do you have about implementing these changes?
- What challenges do you anticipate?
- What remaining questions do you have for me?