

DOGS

Welfare friendly examination procedure without the owner

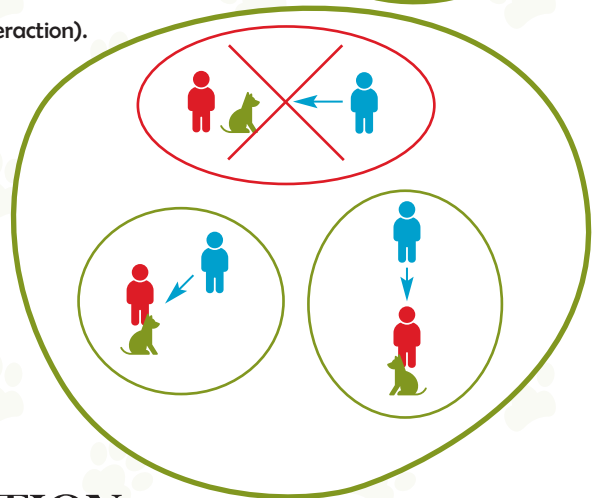
Remember that consultation to the veterinary practice without the owner constitutes a significant routine change for the dogs. Thanks to the attachment bond, dogs feel safe when the owner is present. Without the owner, a dog might feel anxious and fearful.

Clients should be encouraged to teach and train their dog before going to the clinic to accept various forms of handling and muzzling if necessary. A basket muzzle would be a better option since it allows the dog to show appeasing behavior such as licking his lips, yawning, etc., useful for the veterinarian to recognize stress and frustration.



ARRIVAL AT THE CLINIC

1. **Greeting:** Approach from the side, curved or at an angle (social interaction). It is fundamental to take care of proxemics and postures.
2. Appeasing signals are useful to check if the dog is confident with the presence of a stranger (licking, yawn, turn head, away, cower, tuck tail, whine or withdraw).
3. Use pheromones in diffusion.
4. Try to limit waiting time (es. booking consultation).



CONSULTATION

1. Allow the dog to approach and make contact with you in his own time rather than the other way around. The side approach is preferable.
2. Examine the dog on the floor or the table according to the dog preferences and experiences.
3. Handle gentle, Avoid sudden movements and leaning over.
4. Muzzling is less stressful and less likely to provoke defensive behaviour if the dog has been trained to wear it.
5. Where possible, use tricks/palatable food and try to reduce visual stimuli: move smoothly and steadily, so as not to trigger a motion-activated overreaction; use blankets and towels over the head as a barrier during examination.

