MEET THE SPECIALISTS:
Internal Medicine

Our Internal Medicine team provide comprehensive consultation, diagnostic investigations and treatments for cats and dogs with various acute and chronic medical problems. They typically assess cases in which the diagnosis is not yet known.

1. **INJURIES AND ILLNESSES THAT THE INTERNAL MEDICINE TEAM TREAT**
The Internal Medicine team treat cats and dogs with a diverse range of diseases, including gastrointestinal disorders, infectious diseases, endocrine diseases as well as liver, kidney or respiratory diseases. Sometimes, following a diagnosis, cases are transferred to a surgical team for treatment.

2. **INTERNAL MEDICINE TEAM AND EMERGENCY CARE**
The Internal Medicine service also see emergencies, such as patients presenting with severe anaemia, breathing difficulties and endocrine emergencies such as diabetic ketoacidosis, a life threatening complication of diabetes.

3. **HOW DOES THE INTERNAL MEDICINE TEAM WORK WITH OTHER SPECIALISMS?**
We work closely with other specialist teams such as diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology, oncology and the soft tissue surgeons to ensure the best care for each patient.

4. **WHAT'S A TYPICAL INTERNAL MEDICINE PATIENT JOURNEY?**
   1. Initial consultation with patient’s owner – taking a detailed history from the patient’s owner is one of the most important elements of the medicine work up. We ask questions about all aspects of the patient’s life to ensure we have a comprehensive understanding of the presenting complaint.
   2. A detailed and complete clinical examination is the second most important part of a medicine work up. This is usually performed in a systematic manner to ensure the animal is examined from nose to tail. The history and clinical examination findings then guide what investigations we perform.
   3. Many patients will have blood tests performed. These provide useful information about the patient’s general health and suitability for sedation or anaesthesia. In some cases we also perform additional blood tests for specific diseases.
   4. Many patients will also require additional investigations. Diagnostic imaging, such as a CT scan, chest x-rays or abdominal ultrasound, are commonly performed. Other possible investigations include endoscopy (camera study of the gastrointestinal, urinary or respiratory tract), bone marrow biopsy or spinal or joint fluid sampling.
   5. Treatment is started once a diagnosis has been reached. Sicker patients are hospitalised for the initial stage of their treatment. While in hospital they are cared for by our dedicated and attentive nursing team.

5. **FOLLOW UP WITH PATIENTS**
Many medicine cases require some follow up. Occasionally patients return to the hospital for this but the medicine team also work concertedly with the referring veterinary surgeon to ensure the best outcome for the patient. Follow up investigations are usually to assess response to treatment and allow adjustment of medication doses.

6. **TREATMENT OPTIONS**
The Internal Medicine team manage a vast spectrum of different types of diseases. As such medical treatment plans can vary from case to case. In emergency cases treatment may require ICU care e.g. blood transfusions and oxygen therapy. More chronic cases may require diet plans, antibiotics, hormonal therapy, medication to modify the immune system or even inhaler therapy.

Find out more at: vetspecialists.co.uk/services/internal-medicine