

What's Normal?

<u>Animal Type</u>	<u>Temperature</u>	<u>Pulse</u>	<u>Respiration</u>
<u>Dog</u>	101.5° -- 102.5° F	Normal rates for a large dog is 65 - 90 beats per minute, a small dog is 90 – 120 beats per minute	15 – 20 breaths per minute
<u>Cat</u>	100.0° – 102.5° F.	cat is 110 – 130 beats per minute.	20-30 breaths per minute

Temperature/Pulse/Respiration:

Start Your Exam Here! Temperature, pulse, and respiration should be noted before the animal is handled to the point where it becomes excited as excitement may cause changes in the data gathered.

Temperature

How to Check: The thermometer should be inserted rectally per the thermometers manufactures recommendations. During this time the rectal area and surrounding areas can be examined for anal gland abscesses, redness of abnormal lumps, signs of diarrhea, tapeworm segments, fleas near the base of the tail, vulvular discharges, or abnormalities of the testes and scrotum.

Low/High Temps:

Low temperatures can be found in very old animals, emaciated animals, animals about to whelp, and in the final stages of disease just prior to death. Increased temperatures can be caused by high environmental temperatures, excitement, or fever.

Pulse

How to Check: The pulse is normally taken at the femoral artery (main artery of the thigh).

What Sounds Normal? The pulse rate should equal the heart rate and a normal pulse is described as feeling strong and “bounding” whereas a weak pulse is described as “thready”.

CRT (capillary refill time)

To check perfusion, press your finger on the gums. This will force blood out of the tissue. When you remove your finger, the area is now lighter in color (looks like a white dot). Time the length it takes blood to flow back into the tissue and return to normal. Normal time is 1 – 2 seconds.

Respiration

What's normal? The normal respiration pattern of the dog and cat is regular and without effort.

What causes increased/decreased respiration?

An increased rate can be due to excitement, exercise, fever, or disease. Some signs of abnormal respiration are very “deep” breathing when the animal’s sides move with great effort, extended head and neck, very slow or almost imperceptible breathing, an anxious animal that may fight when positioned, mucous membranes and tongue that have a bluish tinge, mouth breathing in cats, or abnormal respiratory sounds such as coughing, bubbling, rattling, or gurgling.