

# Give Your Pet a Home Check up

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(as published in **The Balanced Life Magazine**, August 2000, p 32)

In order to keep ahead of serious problems, it's wise to give dogs and cats a check up at home periodically even though they may not appear to have poor health. Points of animal health to observe are:

## 1) COAT:

Does the coat feel greasy? When you brush the hair backward against the grain is the skin a normal grey-white colour, or is it pink or red with inflammation? Is there dandruff or scales of dead skin in the hairs? Are there any little black specks (excreta of fleas)? Do your hands smell fishy? Is the odour picked up from the animal a rank or rancid smell?

*The coat should be clean and shiny and relatively odour-free. The skin should be grey-white in colour with no scales or specs.*

## 2) EYES:

Is there matter in the corners? Are the whites of the eye stained red? Are the upper and lower lids red, reflecting inflammation, rather than a healthy pink? Are the pupils dull-looking rather than bright, shining, and live-looking?

*The pupils should be clear and bright with the white area being white and the upper and lower lids a healthy pink.*

## 3) EARS:

Is there a lot of wax? Do they look oily? Do they have an offensive odour?

*The ears should be clean and odour-free with pink, clear skin inside.*

## 4) TEETH:

Are they white and shiny or coated with brown deposit? Are the gums inflamed? How does the breath smell?

*The teeth should be free from brown deposits with pink, healthy gums tightly fitting the teeth. The breath should be relatively odour-free. (This is where bacteria from deposits can get into the bloodstream causing serious problems including heart disease.)*

## 5) TEMPERATURE:

Use a rectal thermometer. Do not use a lubricant but very gently insert the mercury end into the anus of the animal holding the thermometer in position for several minutes.

*A dog's normal temperature is 101.4°F. A temperature of 103-107°F indicates a fever.*

*A cat's normal temperature is 101.5-102.2°F.*

*If you suspect a fever, check with your fingers to see if the ears are hot.*

## 6) PULSE:

A dog's normal pulse is 90-100 beats per minute while the normal pulse for a cat is 110-120 beats per minute.