

Mountain Edge Veterinary Assistant Course Outline

Veterinary Science I

Purpose:

Behavior is the key to understanding animals and why they act in specific ways. Instinct, habituation, and anatomical are the keys to understanding why animals behave the way they do.

The fundamental principles of restraint and TPR's are the foundation needed for Veterinary Assistants to build upon and develop further skills. These skills are basic requirements when working with animals in a clinical situation. Once the foundation is developed, some of the building blocks to add to the foundation are being able to identify the correct breed of animal and their basic husbandry needs.

A Veterinary Assistant should have the basic nursing skills to monitor a patient under various situations. This may also include procedures that help with the general welfare of the animal.

Objectives/Skills:

1. Remove and replace an animal from their cage. (small animals, large animals, exotic animals)
2. Restrain small and exotic animals on the exam table and floor
3. Apply both a commercial and gauze muzzle on a dog/cat
4. Apply Elizabethan collar
5. Apply restraint using a rabies pole, leash, towel, net in dogs and cats
6. Restrain a bird for beak, nail, and wing trim
7. Restrain for the various venipuncture sites in the dog and cat
8. Restrain for the various venipuncture sites in the large animal and exotic animal species
9. Restrain for the various injection sites in the small animal, large animal, and exotic animal
10. Restrain exotic animals for examinations and treatments
11. Halter, tie and lead a horse
12. Restrain with the use of twitch, nose tongs
13. Identify the gender of large animals and small animals
14. Obtain and record TPR/CRT values for large animals, small animals, and exotics (know normal TPR values)
15. Take and record accurate history
16. Trim nails on dogs, cats, birds, and exotics.
17. Express anal sacs externally
18. Perform basic grooming (bathe, external ear cleaning, etc)

19. Be familiar with the nutritional requirements for large animals, small animals, and exotics (this includes prescription diets or supplements and nutrition calculations)
20. Evaluate large animal, small animal, and exotic animal body condition
21. Identify the common recognized breeds of dogs, cats, exotics, horses, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens
22. Apply common bandages
23. Identify common bandage materials
24. Clean cages/stalls properly
25. Apply eye/ear medication as directed
26. Administer oral medication to large animals, small animals and exotics

Veterinary Science II

Purpose:

Understanding immunology and the function of vaccinations help the veterinary assistant have a stronger understanding of preventative medicine. This knowledge will assist in client education and identifying common diseases in the different species.

Zoonotic diseases pose a health problem to both the animal and human. It is very important to know what potential zoonotic diseases exist and the appropriate procedure to isolate and prevent further spread of the disease.

Basic anatomy/physiology of the different animal species allows the veterinary assistant to gain a stronger understanding of the disease process and preventative medicine. This knowledge will assist the veterinary assistant in providing appropriate nursing care.

Objectives/Skills:

1. Identify zoonotic diseases
2. Knowledge of isolation and how to prevent further contamination
3. Knowledge of basic immunology and how it applies to preventative medicine
4. Knowledge of common diseases and disorders in large animals, small animals, and exotics
5. Knowledge of recommended vaccine protocol for large animals and small animals
6. Identify the skeletal structure of a dog, cat, horse, and bird
7. Identify each organ and have a general understanding of its function
 - a. Digestive system
 - b. Urinary system
 - c. Reproductive system
 - d. Cardiac/Respiratory system
 - e. Neurological system
 - f. Integumentary system

- g. Eye/Ear system
- h. Muscular/Tissue system
- i. Endocrine System

Veterinary Science III

Purpose:

A Veterinary Assistant is responsible for setting up a surgical room with the necessary equipment needed to perform the procedure. It is their responsibility to assist with patient preparation and recovery from a surgical procedure. The assistant will need to be familiar with sterile techniques, wrapping surgical packs, sterilization of packs, suture material, and common surgical instruments.

Objectives/Skills:

1. Prepare and sterilize surgery packs (instrument, drapes, gowns) using proper techniques (including the use of the autoclave)
2. Identify common surgical instruments
3. Identify common suture material, sizes, and types
4. Clean the surgical room and equipment using the proper techniques
5. Assist with the patient prep and positioning for surgery
6. Knowledge of common surgical procedures and the appropriate patient preparation required
7. Assist with the recovery of a surgical patient
8. Maintain a sterile environment in the operating room both during a procedure and during the post-surgical clean-up
9. Maintain a surgical log
10. Knowledge of common aseptic technique terminology
11. Proper disposal of hazardous medical wastes

Veterinary Science IV

Purpose:

In a veterinary practice, the front office needs to run smoothly before the client is taken into the exam room to see the veterinarian. The reception area is considered the “pulse” of a veterinary clinic. Client communication is an important key to bringing the client back to the practice. Without proper communication, clients are unable to make the best decision concerning their pet’s care.

Proper record keeping is essential to keep a hospital running in an orderly fashion. Accurate records are essential for processing tests, keeping current histories, and following state/federal laws.

Objectives/Skills:

1. Apply common scheduling techniques
2. Admit and discharge patients
3. Prepare common state/federal certificates (health, Coggins, rabies, etc.) with appropriate information prior to the veterinarian's signature
4. Perform basic filling and retrieving of medical records
5. Knowledge of common computer programs utilized in the veterinary practice
6. Retrieve and input patient /client information
7. Perform basic accounting procedures, invoice, and billing utilizing the computer program
8. Utilize proper medical terminology
9. Answer telephone calls and respond to common questions/emergencies
10. Request appropriate records and information from other clinics or veterinarians
11. Maintain appropriate logs (radiographs, surgical, laboratory, pharmaceutical)
12. Maintain and restock inventory within the clinic
13. Utilize basic cleaning procedures appropriate for the different areas of the hospital
14. Apply understanding of interpersonal skills and team dynamics in all aspects of communication
15. Develop and provide client education in a clear and accurate manner appropriate for the client's understanding
16. Recognize the legality of the veterinary-client-patient relationship
17. Communication skills for euthanasia
18. Write a standard business letter
19. Write a resume/cover letter
20. Understand the roles and responsibilities of each veterinary health team member and how that affects the patient outcome
21. Understand OSHA and how it applies to the veterinary hospital

Veterinary Science V

Purpose:

Laboratory techniques acquire information needed to complete a diagnosis. If the laboratory work is not performed accurately or the sample was not collected appropriately, this could prevent an accurate diagnosis or treatment. A veterinary assistant with the knowledge and ability to collect samples for laboratory procedures will be able to save time and money for both the veterinarian and client.

Objectives/Skills:

1. Record and file lab results
2. Collect urine samples by free catch (voided)
3. Perform a visual examination (color, clarity) on urine
4. Prepare fecal flotations, centrifugation samples, and a direct sample
5. Identify external parasites (ticks, lice, mites, fleas)
6. Assist with necropsy
7. Knowledge of rabies and how to handle specimens
8. Proper disposal of deceased animals
9. Assist with blood collection samples
10. Identify common blood collection tubes and when they are used
11. Assist with various specimen staining techniques utilized in the veterinary practice
12. Accurately record laboratory results
13. Maintain laboratory log

Veterinary Science VI**Purpose:**

A Veterinary Assistant needs to have knowledge of imaging safety techniques in order to prevent radiation damage to them or the patient. They will need to be familiar with restraint and positioning techniques to assist the technician/veterinarian with diagnostic images. Once the radiographs are taken, the assistant will need to know the various developing techniques and how to maintain quality control.

Veterinary pharmacology is constantly changing. New and improved pharmaceuticals are being developed to help improve the quality of patient care. The Veterinary Assistant needs to be aware of the changes and development. They need to accurately record the various pharmaceuticals, perform inventory, properly label medication, dispose of medication and properly handle pharmaceuticals.

Objectives/Skills:

1. Apply safety measures when assisting with radiographs
2. Assist with the restraint/patient prep/patient positioning for radiographs and ultrasounds
3. Develop radiographs (Be familiar with hand tanks, automatic processors, and digital radiographs)
4. Label, file ,store , and log radiographs
5. Maintain radiographic equipment, film, and cassettes
6. Maintain quality control

7. Maintain inventory, keep record of inventory on hand, and check expiration dates
8. Understand and apply pharmaceutical terminology
9. Understand the legalities involving pharmaceuticals including the regulations with controlled substances
10. Understand prescription medications versus over-the-counter medications
11. Recognize common drug categories and differentiate the drugs found in the categories
12. Label and package dispensed medications correctly
13. Know how to properly store, handle and dispose of medications including hazardous waste, therapeutic agents, biological agents, and pesticides
14. Reconstitute vaccines and be familiar with handling procedures
15. Recognize the common routes of medication and vaccine administration that are used in the veterinary practice and know how to properly restrain for each route

Veterinary Science VII

Purpose:

The veterinary assistant will have the opportunity to put into practice the skills and knowledge gained throughout the course. Competency for specific skills will need to be demonstrated and evaluated by the clinic veterinarian and/or technician. Skills and competency will be based upon NAVTA specifications.

45 Hour externship