

Describe the average day for an emergency room (ER) veterinarian.

When the emergency room veterinarian first arrives at the hospital, he/she consults with the veterinarians and veterinary technicians from the previous shift and performs “rounds” during which the staff reviews the cases of all the animal patients in the hospital and discusses each one’s diagnosis, care, and treatment plan. Usually the rest of the day centers around caring for the current animal patients, like applying and cleaning sutures, consulting with specialty veterinarians on complicated cases, updating owners about their pets, writing reports and ordering medicines, and treating emergency cases as they arrive. Some emergency room veterinarians also find time to write articles or books – for instance, I just finished an article about the negative side effects of certain tranquilizers – while others present medical lectures to veterinary students or work with veterinary interns.

What kinds of emergencies does an ER veterinarian treat?

Like people, animals are subject to accidents and illness, so an emergency animal hospital has to be prepared to treat a wide variety of cases. For instance, emergency room veterinarians may see a dog that swallowed a foreign object (such as a small ball or a child’s toy) or a rabbit with a cut that needs or a cat that has been hit by a car and is in need of emergency surgery. While many veterinary emergency hospitals primarily treat small animals such as dogs, cats, birds, mice, rabbits, and snakes, some specialize in emergency services for larger animals (horses, cows, etc.) and other emergency hospitals are equipped to handle any size or species of animal.

What kind of medical equipment is used to treat animals?

The equipment to treat animals is very similar to that found in human hospitals. Radiographs are taken to look at the patient’s bones to see if there are any fractures. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines and Computed Tomography (CT or CAT) scans may be used to photograph the animal’s internal organs. Blood tests are performed to monitor infection and illnesses. Lasers are now used routinely instead of scalpels during some surgeries. Endoscopes (tubes with tiny cameras on the end) are used to see inside an animal’s digestive or respiratory tract or to retrieve foreign objects such as pennies or bottle caps from an animal’s stomach.

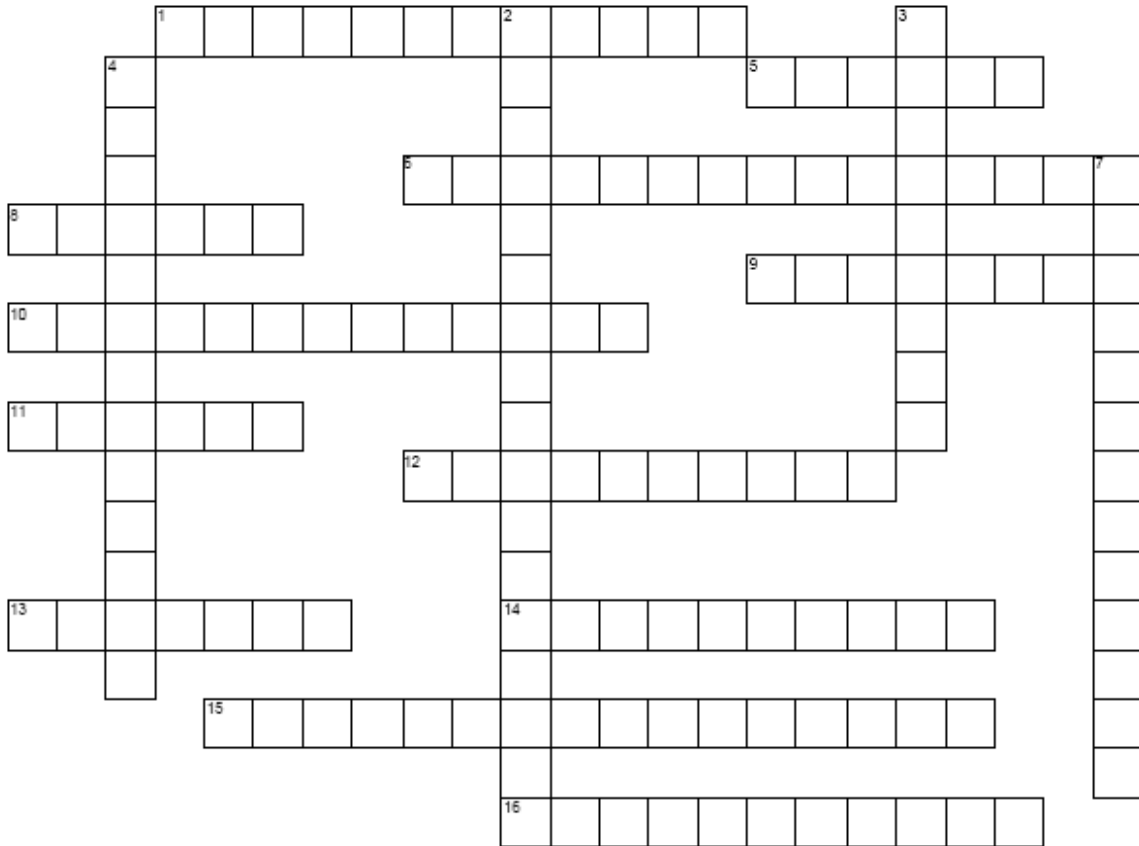
What types of veterinary specialists are available today?

Just as in human medicine, veterinary medicine includes many different types of specialties. For example, veterinary cardiologists treat heart-related illnesses and perform heart surgery. Veterinary oncologists treat all types of cancer in animals. Veterinary anesthesiologists administer medications that relieve pain and keep the animal sedated during surgical procedures. Veterinary neurologists treat nervous disorders and perform brain and spinal surgeries. Veterinary ophthalmologists treat eye disorders. Veterinary orthopedic surgeons repair bone and joint injuries, and veterinary soft-tissue surgeons perform surgeries for digestive, respiratory, or other non-orthopedic problems. Veterinarians can also specialize in emergency medicine.

What kinds of foods are toxic to animals and could result in a visit to the ER?

Some of the foods we eat everyday can be poisonous or even lethal to dogs and cats. Among the dangerous foods are: chocolate, which can cause hyperactivity, vomiting, muscle tremors, and seizures;

grapes and raisins, which can cause vomiting and abdominal pain and contribute to kidney failure; onions, which can destroy red blood cells and cause severe anemia; and fatty food which can cause pancreatitis (a painful swelling of the pancreas that can make them very sick).



ACROSS

- 1 veterinarian who specializes in treating heart-related illnesses
- 5 meeting to review each animal's case and treatment
- 6 veterinarian who specializes in treating eye disorders
- 8 reduced ability of blood to transfer oxygen to tissue
- 9 broken bone
- 10 medicine given to calm and relax an animal
- 11 stitches used to close a wound
- 12 veterinarian who specializes in treating cancer
- 13 machine used to generate three dimensional images of internal organs (two words)

14 x-ray images

- 15 veterinarian who specializes in administering medications
- 16 veterinarian who specializes in treating nervous disorders

DOWN

- 2 Veterinarian who specializes in repairing bone and joint injuries (two words)
- 3 a tube with a tiny camera on the end used to see inside an animal's body
- 4 when an animal is abnormally and easily excitable
- 7 systematic course of action taken to help treat an animal (two words)