

**Covid-19 recheck case clinic update 5-2021:**

It is very important to do your follow-up as directed by your clinician, now by *telephone* or [Zoom](#) but, due to state and prescription law, will require a brief “curbside exam” at least every 12 months. For most rechecks, to avoid technical (e.g., Zoom) delays taking up your valuable appointment time, we suggest just telephone rechecks. Remember that **you MUST be an active client/patient (defined as following treatment plan follow-up directions and having your next appointment booked on our schedule!) for us to be able to approve medication refills.** Medication refills for inactive patients (not following recheck directions or cancelling and not rescheduling promptly) will likely delay or possibly even deny refill requests for your pet. “Help us help you” by *doing your part* and remaining an active client 😊! We have already been doing phone rechecks with clients whose pets have been seen “in person” within the last 12 months for several decades now since not all of our clients and pets can come in-person to each appointment (may live hours away, pet that does not travel well, clients’ schedule, etc.) and they are **very effective** in managing behavior cases when “in person” appointments are not practical. For those pets who are due for an “in person” exam (for example coming up on 12 months since last seen at the office) we can combine with telemedicine appointment with a very brief “curbside exam” in front of the doctor’s house in Carmel Valley **when the doctor is in town** seeing clients to re-establish the legally required Veterinarian/Client/Patient relationship (VCPR), which allows all California veterinarians to diagnose and prescribe treatments including prescription medications. Since we plan the “exam” part for after the phone recheck, scheduling next recheck and taking payment is completed, we advise planning to be in front of the doctor’s Carmel Valley home office about 30 minutes into your recheck time. Some clients find it easier to come a bit early, park nearby on the street and do the phone part from their car (especially if have to drive a distance) so that they can just hop out with their pet for the brief “curbside exam” about 30 minutes in 😊

If you decide to postpone vital rechecks versus continuing follow-up by phone or telemedicine appointments, please note that you are doing so against your specialist’s medical advice. For those that have not scheduled/rescheduled their next recheck (“inactive patients”) please let us know ASAP if you intend to take advantage of these telemedicine options so that we can work together to get you on the tight spring/summer schedule. If you are coming up on the 12-month exam requirement (or past due) it is **VERY IMPORTANT** to get the recheck/curbside exam scheduled & completed before the doctor goes up to Washington state home office where he is likely to be much of the summer into early fall since he can do phone-only appointments but not actually “examine” patients while out of state.

**Please let us know the preferred phone number where we should call you for your phone recheck appointment if you have more than 1. Payment is taken during the appointment (see P.S. below).**

If, in spite of our urging you still plan to discontinue follow-up at this time (we will not be able to refill meds for you in that case), we encourage you continue carefully following your treatment plan and to let us know ASAP when you are ready to schedule your vital phone recheck so that we can offer you what options remain at that time. The sooner you let us know the more options you will likely have to choose from.

We are sorry for any unavoidable disruption in our “normal” specialty practice services and our clients’ schedule with these steps, but they are for all of our health and it is vital for us all to work together to make it through this challenging time. We, the Behavior Specialty services, are actually very well situated to continue to help our clients/patients with telemedicine compared to most other boarded specialties.

We hope you and yours stay safe during this time 😊

P.S. Please note that clients that choose to pay by credit or debit card (we accept Visa, Mastercard or Discover) will pay a **4% convenience fee** (also be sure to let doctor know this ASAP when we start to allow sufficient time to check out via credit card as it takes longer). To avoid this additional modest convenience fee, simply pay using [VENMO= \(@Patrick-Melese\)](#), [Google Pay](#) or [Zelle](#) or, if you can coming "in person" you can also pay with cash or check.

**"We confirm appointments as a courtesy; it is still your responsibility to stay aware of the time and date of your appointment or cancel/reschedule with sufficient (48 business hours) notice to avoid incurring late cancellation fees."**