

The invisible RVT: What Registered Veterinary Technicians do for you and your pets

Guelph, ON – Your beloved dog Spot is sick. You take him to see your veterinarian and they take Spot ‘to the back’ to run some tests. But what, or rather who, is in the back? Likely it’s a Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) who will be running those tests and caring for your animal under the direction of a veterinarian.

You have likely seen and interacted with an RVT at your clinic without realizing it. RVTs are formally educated and trained professionals working as members of the veterinary healthcare team.

“RVTs are integral members of the veterinary team, who meet and surpass the high standards that clients have come to expect for their pets”, said Laurie Williams, RVT and continuing education manager for the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT). “RVTs combine excellent practical skills and knowledge with a genuine passion for animal health and welfare.”

RVTs are involved in many different aspects of pet health care. They help to ensure clinics run smoothly and efficiently and help to deliver the best possible care for your pets. The following list contains just a few examples of RVT duties:

- Husbandry, restraint, and handling of animals
- Capturing and processing diagnostic radiographs and ultrasounds
- Diagnostic laboratory tests for the purposes of hematology, clinical chemistry, and urinalysis
- Surgical preparation and assistance
- Anaesthetic administration and monitoring.
- Administration and dispensing of medication and treatments as prescribed by a veterinarian
- Nutrition management and planning

In order to use the title ‘RVT’ in, for example, Ontario, an individual must have attended an accredited college veterinary technician program, passed a national exam, submitted a clear criminal record check, completed professionalism and ethics training, and be a member of the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT). RVTs also must complete continuing education regularly in order to keep their credential. Each province has its own member association for RVTs. For more information about RVTs in Ontario visit www.oavt.org.

Next time you take Spot to the clinic, ask to talk to an RVT to see what they can do for you!

For more information:

Colleen McElwain
Canadian Animal Health Institute
(519) 763-7777



RVTs are an integral part of the veterinary health care team and work under the direction of a veterinarian to give your pet the best possible care.