Clinical examination and weighing of patients in small animal consultations

N. J. Robinson, M. L. Brennan, M. Cobb, R. S. Dean

**Context**
Clinical examination is important in the detection and management of disease in small animals. Understanding clinical examination practices is the first step in determining the role of these procedures in the consultation. This study aimed to describe clinical examination and weighing of patients during small animal consultations.

**Main conclusion**
A full clinical examination was performed for almost two-thirds of patients presented, and abnormalities were commonly detected. Weighing was performed less often than clinical examination, although weighing was more frequent for some types of consultations and patients. This suggests clinical examination and weighing may be useful tools for the detection of underlying disease.

**Results**
Full clinical examination was performed in 60.6 per cent (1145 of 1889) of patients and focused examination in a further 31.4 per cent (594 of 1889). Significantly more problems were discussed when a full compared with a focused examination was conducted (P<0.001). Type of clinical examination varied by type of consultation (P<0.001) and species (P<0.001). Less than half of the patients examined were weighed (47.5 per cent, 897 of 1889).

**Interpretation**
The role of the clinical examination may vary between type of consultation and species, and full clinical examination and weighing may not always be practical or necessary. The results suggest a more thorough examination is associated with discussion of more problems, although these results should be interpreted with caution as the cause and effect relationship here is unclear.

**Significance of findings**
The results provide an insight into clinical examination practices. Future work could focus on identifying patient groups where a thorough examination is likely to have a positive impact on long-term health outcomes.
Clinical examination and weighing of patients in small animal consultations

N. J. Robinson, M. L. Brennan, M. Cobb and R. S. Dean

Veterinary Record 2015 176: 387 originally published online November 28, 2014
doi: 10.1136/vr.102829

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://veterinaryrecord.bmj.com/content/176/15/387.1

These include:

References
This article cites 3 articles, 0 of which you can access for free at:
http://veterinaryrecord.bmj.com/content/176/15/387.1#BIBL

Open Access
This is an Open Access article distributed in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial (CC BY-NC 4.0) license, which permits others to distribute, remix, adapt, build upon this work non-commercially, and license their derivative works on different terms, provided the original work is properly cited and the use is non-commercial. See: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Email alerting service
Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Topic Collections
Articles on similar topics can be found in the following collections
Open access (109)

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/