

AAHA Importance to You and Your Pet

The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) is an international association of more than 36,000 veterinary care providers who treat companion animals. Established in 1933, AAHA is well-known among veterinarians and pet owners for its high standards in veterinary practices and quality pet care.

AAHA is the only organization that accredits animal hospitals throughout the U.S. and Canada. Approximately 3,000 AAHA-accredited hospitals voluntarily choose to be evaluated on 900 standards in the following areas: quality of care, diagnostic and pharmacy, management, medical records, and facility. Consultants regularly visit these hospitals to ensure compliance with AAHA's *Standards of Accreditation* for services and facilities.

Why does this matter to you? Here are a few examples of how AAHA's standards impact you and your pet.

- The Standards require hospitals to provide diagnostic services (x-ray and laboratory) so that they can quickly and accurately diagnose your pet.
- The Standards focus on the quality of care in the areas of: anesthesia, contagious diseases, dentistry, pain management, patient care, surgery and emergency care.
- Accredited hospitals have an onsite pharmacy (another standards area) so they can begin treatment immediately.
- AAHA Standards require that medical records be thorough and complete to help practitioners better understand your pet's medical history and how past health issues might be impacting their current medical status.

The *AAHA Standards of Accreditation*, developed and published by AAHA, are widely accepted as representing those components of veterinary practice that represent high-quality care. The Standards are periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that they remain consistent with evolving knowledge and technology.

Accreditation helps veterinary hospitals stay on the leading edge of veterinary medicine and provide the quality and range of services you and your pet deserve.