Whether you are a new bird owner, moving to a new neighborhood, or you're simply looking for a new avian veterinarian, here are some tips to help you find an avian veterinarian you can trust.

Birds, like us, need to have annual (or more frequent) wellness visits with a veterinarian. These visits are important to monitor health, as well as to share new information to improve both the physical and social wellbeing of our feathered family members.

Why Do I Need an Avian Veterinarian?

Veterinary students receive a broad educational experience covering a multitude of species. Students who have a special interest in birds typically will spend part of their senior year in veterinary school in an externship working with veterinarians who treat birds in their practice. After graduation, many veterinarians continue their interest in avian medicine with internships and residencies or work within veterinary practices with doctors who have a special interest in birds.

Continuing education in avian medicine is extremely important for avian veterinarians. Professional associations, such as the Association of Avian Veterinarians (AAV), provide opportunities for avian veterinarians to share the most recent advances in caring for birds through the association's annual conference, online courses, and literature.

Avian veterinarians can be found around the globe, and the AAV website "Find-a-Vet" tool, makes it easy for bird owners to locate nearby avian veterinarians.

For More Information

For more information on birds, ask your veterinarian for copies of the following AAV Client Education Brochures:

- Avian Chlamydiosis and Psittacosis
- Veterinary Care for Your Pet Bird*
- Basic Care for Companion Birds*
- Behavior: Normal and Abnormal
- Caring for Backyard Chickens
- Digital Scales
- Feather Loss
- Feeding Birds
- Injury Prevention and Emergency Care
- Managing Chronic Egg-laying in Your Pet Bird
- Signs of Illness in Companion Birds*
- Ultraviolet Lighting for Companion Birds
- When Should I Take My Bird to a Veterinarian?*
- Zoonotic Diseases in Backyard Poultry*

**Available in multiple languages. All others are available in English only at this time.*

Online Resources

Follow AAV on Facebook (**www.facebook.com/aavonline**) for great tips and the latest news for pet bird owners. You can also find us on Twitter (**@aavonline**) and YouTube!

Our website, **www.aav.org**, offers a Find-a-Vet tool to help pet bird owners locate avian veterinarians around the world. We also offer a variety of resources such as basic bird care instructions and more. Visit the website today!

AAV offers bird clubs a news bulletin for use in their newsletters. Clubs may contact the Publications Office (**pubs@aav.org**) for information.

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ASSOCIATION OF AVIAN VETERINARIANS
AAV



FINDING A VETERINARIAN FOR YOUR FEATHERED FRIEND



FINDING A VETERINARIAN
FOR YOUR FEATHERED FRIEND

An Avian Veterinarian Can Teach You What Every Bird Owner Should Know

- What kind of daily care your bird needs
- Proper nutrition for your species of bird
- Housing and environmental needs for your bird
- How to provide environmental enrichment, including safe toys and foraging opportunities
- How to prevent accidents
- How to prevent the spread of disease from one bird to another
- How to provide emergency care to your bird
- How to identify signs of illness so that proper medical care can be sought
- How often your bird needs medical care

What Should You Look for in an Avian Veterinarian?

After locating an avian veterinarian near you, call the veterinary office, and ask to set up an appointment to meet the veterinarian and visit the office. Veterinarians welcome visits and pre-purchase consultations. This will give you the opportunity to ask questions about the hospital such as:

- Do all the veterinarians at the facility treat birds?
- Are the technicians trained in handling and treating birds?
- How are emergencies handled if the office is closed?
- Does the facility have a separate area for hospitalized birds?
- Does the veterinarian care for pet birds regularly?

Emergency Visits

Many veterinarians treat birds during the day in their offices. However, unlike dogs and cats that can be referred to local 24-hour veterinary clinics after business hours, birds, if they have an emergency late at night or on a weekend, often have nowhere to go. Most local emergency clinics do not treat birds, or if they do, they do very infrequently. Thus, it is critical when you are choosing an avian veterinarian, that you discuss how he or she deals with after-hours avian emergencies. Does he or she have a plan? Does he or she come into the hospital to treat bird emergencies or refer them elsewhere? You want to be sure to have this conversation with your veterinarian before your bird experiences an emergency, so that you are not frantically trying to find care for your pet when your veterinarian's office is closed.

What Does Board Certification Mean?

Some veterinarians have elected to pursue their studies and practice of avian medicine to a more advanced level and have become board-certified specialists in avian medicine. Board-certified veterinarians must recertify regularly. The organizations that certify veterinarians in the specialty of avian medicine are:

- American Board of Veterinary Practitioners – abvp.com
- European College of Zoological Medicine – eczm.org
- Australian Veterinary Boards Council - avbc.asn.au

While board certification ensures that your veterinarian has had advanced specialized training in avian medicine and surgery, there are many caring, well-trained qualified veterinarians who regularly work with birds but are not board-certified and are able to provide excellent bird care. As with any medical care practitioner, whether for yourself or your beloved pet, it is important to be comfortable with your care provider and not be afraid to ask questions about his/her experience. Visiting and touring the facility and speaking openly about your concerns regarding care of your pet are key to selecting and establishing a trusting relationship with your avian veterinarian.

Looking for an Avian Veterinarian Near You?

For help finding a qualified avian veterinarian in your area, go to www.aav.org and click "Find a Vet."

AAV: Setting a Standard in Avian Care Since 1980

Avian medicine is a distinct and very specialized field that requires extensive training, advanced skills, and facilities specifically designed and equipped to treat and hospitalize birds. The Association of Avian Veterinarians was established to provide veterinarians with this special education and to keep them up to date with the latest information on bird health. The AAV holds an annual conference on avian medicine and publishes the peer-reviewed *Journal of Avian Medicine and Surgery*. AAV also makes annual contributions toward avian conservation and sponsors studies advancing the understanding of avian medicine.

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