



EXCELLENCE IN
DERMATOLOGY™

zoetis™

DERMATOLOGY REFERRAL GUIDE

DELIVERING QUALITY CARE AND STRONGER
CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS WITH DERMATOLOGY REFERRAL



DEAR VETERINARY COLLEAGUES,

We know that dermatology cases are an important part of your practice. We hope that the diagnostic and treatment education materials offered at www.ExcellenceInDermatology.com will help you find a solution.

However we also realize that some cases are complicated and require extra time and attention. For many of these cases it would be best to develop a successful relationship with a dermatology specialist. We have undertaken a review of successful referral practices, and we have developed this Referral Guide to help you and your clients get the most out of the specialist referral process. In this guide you will find information about:

1. WHEN TO REFER A DERMATOLOGY CASE

2. HOW TO REFER A DERMATOLOGY CASE

3. A DERMATOLOGY REFERRAL FORM

4. WHAT MAY HAPPEN AFTER REFERRING A DERMATOLOGY CASE

Please feel free to use all or any of these materials. We hope you will find them helpful!

THE ZOETIS DERMATOLOGY TEAM



WHEN TO REFER A Dermatology Case



WHEN YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE MAKING A DIAGNOSIS

- Maybe you have gathered all of the necessary information but need some assistance interpreting the results.
- Maybe you're unsure of which test to perform next
- Maybe you know what tests to run but the client seems reluctant to spend any more money without a second opinion
- Maybe you know which test to perform but don't have the expertise or facility available



WHEN YOU HAVE MADE A DIAGNOSIS BUT THE CLIENT IS HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME UNDERSTANDING OR ACCEPTING IT

- Maybe the case is so rare that the client has questions you cannot answer
- When you need more information on the long-term prognosis for the condition



WHEN YOU HAVE A DIAGNOSIS BUT YOU'RE UNSURE WHICH COURSE OF THERAPY TO FOLLOW

- A therapy that you have used successfully in the past doesn't seem to be working this time
- Many dermatologic diseases have several different courses of therapy and it can be confusing remembering which to use when, at what dose, for how long



WHEN YOU'RE DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION AND THE RESULTING CONFLICT IS NEGATIVELY AFFECTING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CLIENT

- If you offer a referral as soon as you recognize that you and the client have conflicting opinions, or when you first notice that the client is becoming frustrated, often the referral will help resolve the conflict and improve your relationship with the client thereafter.
- In many of these cases fostering a "triangle" of communication (between you, the client, and the specialist) for future follow-ups can be very helpful



HOW TO REFER A Dermatology Case

1

PROVIDE GUIDANCE BY FILLING IN A REFERRAL FORM. YOUR DERMATOLOGIST MAY PROVIDE YOU WITH A FORM, OR FEEL FREE TO USE THE [EXCELLENCE IN DERMATOLOGY REFERRAL FORM](#)

This summary can be faxed or mailed to the office prior to the client's appointment or hand-carried by the client. Our review of referral relationships has shown that the use of a short referral form (like the one attached here) can streamline the communication and enhance the quality of the referral process.

2

SEND A COPY OF THE RESULTS OF ANY DIAGNOSTIC TESTS PERFORMED RELATIVE TO THE SKIN DISEASE.

The results can be faxed or mailed. Photocopies of the complete record are not as useful.

3

INSTRUCT THE CLIENT NOT TO BATHE OR GROOM THE PATIENT FOR AT LEAST 7 DAYS PRIOR TO THE APPOINTMENT

The dermatology specialist can get a much better picture of the animal's dermatologic condition if they are presented without the effects of recent bathing.

4

SUGGEST THAT THE CLIENT BRINGS ANY BOTTLES OF MEDICATIONS, SHAMPOOS, RINSES, SUPPLEMENTS, AS WELL AS DIETS AND TREATS THAT THEY HAVE USED TO THE APPOINTMENT

It's always amazing how many times clients still have unused medications at home - maybe this is why the pet isn't improving. Alternatively, you can suggest that they take pictures of all these and bring the pictures to show at their first meeting.

A DERMATOLOGY Referral Form

THIS FORM IS RECOMMENDED FOR USE BY VETERINARIANS to provide a basic case summary when referring a new case to a dermatology specialist. Please note that your dermatologist may have their own form which may require additional information.

DATE

REFERRING VETERINARIAN INFORMATION

DVM

Hospital

Phone

Fax

Email

CLIENT INFORMATION

Pet

Dog

Cat

Other

Age

Sex

Breed

Owner Name

Owner Phone

MAIN COMPLAINT (Please provide important information about this case and your reason for referral)

I have included all prior diagnostic reports performed relative to the skin disease (e.g. culture results, histopathology report, blood work, thyroid panel, etc)

CURRENT MEDICATIONS USED (Please list all current medications used)

I have asked the pet owner to bring all current medications (including topical) to their initial referral consultation.

OTHER (Optional; Any other important comments about this case)

Please telephone if there is any special or immediate information that you need to share or receive.

WHAT MAY HAPPEN AFTER REFERRING A Dermatology Case

1

ESTABLISH FROM THE SPECIALIST HOW AND WHEN THEY WILL BE PROVIDING YOU WITH INFORMATION ON YOUR PATIENT.

- Each specialist communicates case information a little differently and various dermatology conditions have different workups. Find out what you can expect from the specialist you referred your patient to.
- If you have individual needs or preferences (such as receiving electronic copy of lab results), be sure to discuss this with the specialist from the start – when you refer the case. Inform the owner how the specialist will be communicating details about their pet to you and what your role will be in communicating these findings with the pet owner.

2

YOUR CLIENT WILL BE REFERRED BACK TO YOU FOR ROUTINE CARE AND POSSIBLE DERMATOLOGIC FOLLOW-UPS

- Usually dermatology cases are not resolved within one visit and this needs to be made clear to the pet owner. If you have not heard back from your dermatologist within the timeframe established, follow up with them and then the pet owner.
- Communication during the referral process involves a “triangle”: a 3 -way dialogue between you, the pet owner and the dermatologist.

3

THE REFERRAL PROCESS BUILDS TRUST, STRENGTHENS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PET OWNER, AND GENERATES LOYALTY IN THE LONG TERM

- By referring your dermatology case, know that you have offered your pet owners and patients the best possible care, establishing your commitment to their pet’s health and quality of life while building trust and loyalty to your practice.