

Hospital for Small Animals

The Neurology & Neurosurgery Service



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
The Royal (Dick) School
of Veterinary Studies

Welcome to The Neurology & Neurosurgery Service

The Neurology and Neurosurgery Service includes specialists in neurology and neurosurgery, qualified vets undergoing further training (residents) and a dedicated service nurse. We offer compassionate, specialist care for companion animals with:

- **Epilepsy** (recurrent seizures)
- **Paroxysmal dyskinesias** (episodic movement disorders, e.g. tremors, muscle spasms)
- **Intervertebral disc disease** (slipped discs affecting neck or back)
- **Meningitis and meningoencephalitis** (inflammation of the meninges and/or brain)
- **Neuropathies** (e.g. facial nerve paralysis)
- **Myopathies** (e.g. masticatory muscle myositis, polymyositis)
- **Myasthenia gravis**
- **Tumours affecting the brain or spinal cord**
- **Head and spinal cord trauma**
- **Congenital and developmental diseases** (e.g. hydrocephalus)
Degenerative diseases (e.g. canine degenerative myelopathy, cognitive dysfunction similar to dementia in people)

Our aim is to provide the highest standard of care and quality of life for patients with neurological illness. We collaborate with other specialists working at the Hospital for Small Animals, in particular, specialists in diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, critical care and oncology. In addition to treating cases, we have an ethical clinical research and education programme. This is important in furthering our understanding of neurological diseases to improve animal care.

Neurology & Neurosurgery Service

A woman in a blue lab coat is examining a dog's head. A person wearing glasses is assisting with the examination. The dog is lying down, and the background is a clinical setting.

What is a Veterinary Neurologist?

The service is run by specialists in Neurology and Neurosurgery. Neurology is the branch of medicine that treats diseases of the nervous system: brain, spinal cord, nerves and muscles. This encompasses such common problems as epilepsy, slipped disks, spinal and head injuries, meningitis and cancer of the nervous system.

How do I get help from a Veterinary Neurologist?

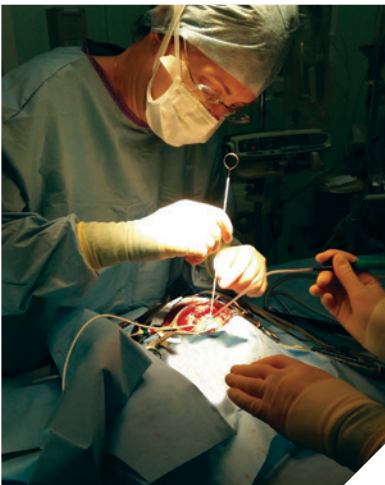
Similarly to referrals in human hospitals, your primary vet (similar to your GP) will need to contact us and refer your pet for a consultation with our service. We will ask the primary vet to send us the history and information on diagnostic tests already performed.

What should I bring at the first visit?

Please bring all the medications and supplements that your pet is currently taking. Ideally, your pet should be starved for eight hours prior to the consultation (please contact us prior to the consultation to discuss any special requirements), however, your pet should have access to water at all times. If your pet is experiencing episodic clinical signs, please bring a written diary with dates of the episodes and duration and a video of the episodes.

What should I expect at the first visit?

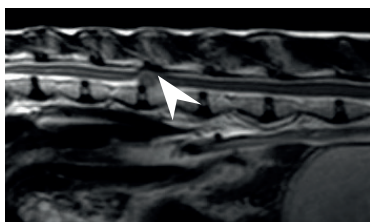
After checking in at our reception desk, a resident or a final year veterinary student will escort you to the consulting room. They will ask you questions pertinent to your pet's medical history and will perform a general physical examination and a neurological examination. Then they will excuse themselves and discuss the case with the supervising neurologist. The neurologist will then present you with findings, treatment options, and answer your questions. Our initial consultation may last 60 to 90 minutes. Some diagnostic tests may be done during the scheduled time, such as collection of blood samples. Further work-ups may need to be scheduled for later that day or a future date.



Following your visit, a detailed letter will be sent to your vet so they have a complete record of your pet's health and can remain involved in future care. After the initial examination is complete, the neurologist may recommend specific tests on blood or urine, radiographs (x-rays, usually performed under sedation), CT (computed tomography) scan or MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) to visualise bones or soft tissues respectively, or a spinal tap to collect a small sample of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), which surrounds the brain and spinal cord. CT scan, MRI and spinal taps require the patients to be completely still for a prolonged period of time and they are usually performed under general anaesthesia.

Other tests that will require sedation or anaesthesia are tests to assess the function (electrical activity) in muscles (EMG), nerves (nerve conduction velocity), brain (EEG) and ears (hearing test or BAER).

While your pet is in the hospital, the student or resident will help the nurses caring for your pet and will be responsible for communications, closely supervised by the neurologist.



MRI – T2W sagittal of the spine of an elderly cat with paresis progressing to complete paralysis

The image shows a large intradural- extramedullary mass (see arrowhead) which was removed surgically and diagnosed

as a spinal meningioma. The cat was able to stand and took the first few steps without support four days after the surgical procedure.

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The Hospital for Small Animals

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

The University of Edinburgh

Easter Bush Campus

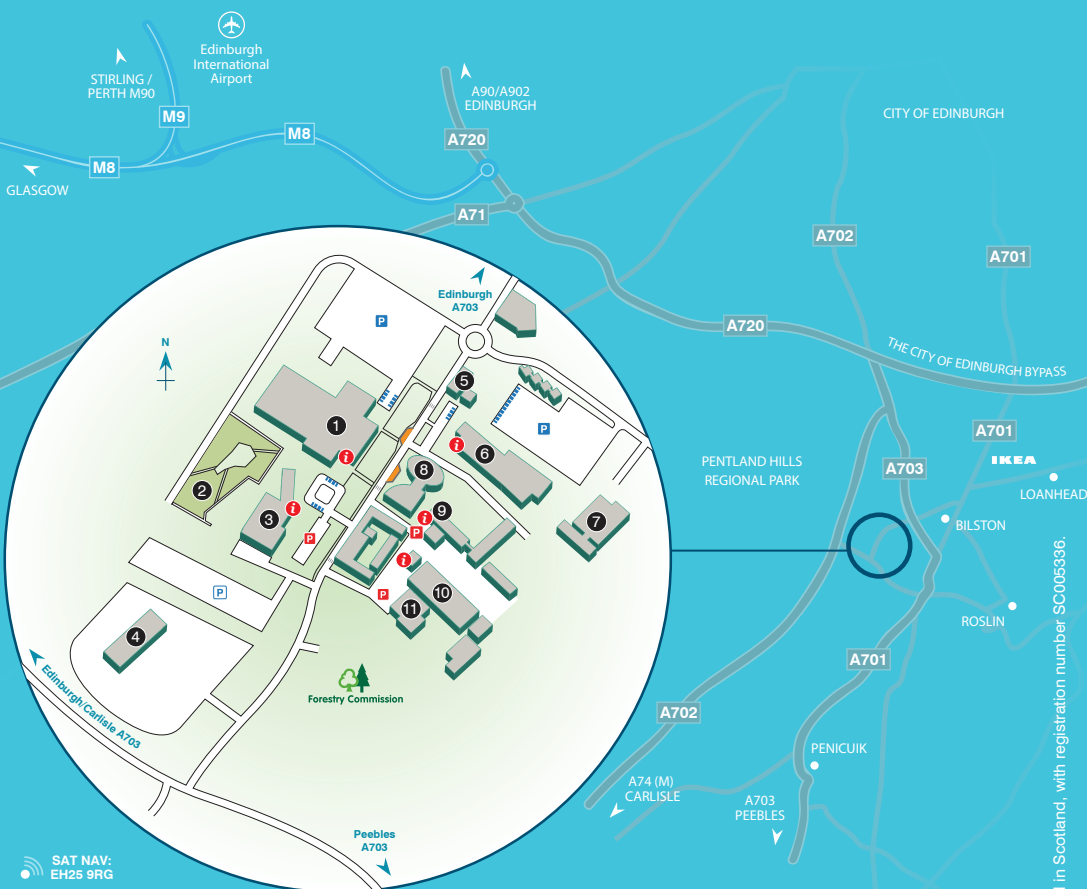
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1. Veterinary Teaching Building
2. Community Garden
3. **The Hospital for Small Animals and Riddell-Swan Veterinary Cancer Centre**
4. The Bumstead Building
5. Campus Service Centre

6. The Roslin Institute
7. The Greenwood Building
8. Campus Hub and Roslin Innovation Centre
9. Farm Animal Practice
10. Equine Hospital and Practice
11. Farm Animal Hospital

- Overflow parking
- Disabled parking
- Main entrance & reception
- Bus stop
- Client parking
- Parking

The Power of Three: The unique offering of Excellence in Clinical, Teaching and Research make up the three pillars of The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

As part of The University of Edinburgh, the Hospital of Small Animals is a not-for-profit organisation.