

## Ask The Right Questions (Find The Right Bird Vet)

### Find the right veterinarian for your bird with this guide

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Ask the right questions before you make an appointment for your bird with a vet. Courtesy Tony Thackeray, Utah

So you've browsed the back of Birds USA Annual Directory guide or looked for one at the Association of Avian Veterinarians' website (<http://www.aav.org/>) searching for an avian veterinarian. Other good sources are your local bird store or bird club for recommended avian veterinarians. When you found a vet that you might be interested in, it's time to do your homework. Ask certain questions to determine if this veterinarian will be right for you and your bird.

#### Looking For A Vet

You're looking for an avian veterinarian you can build a relationship with over many years so ask about their character. Ask questions like:

How is the vet? (Personable, straightforward, knowledgeable, etc.)

How is the veterinary staff?

Why did they choose this particular vet?

How did their birds react to the vet?

Is the vet knowledgeable about a variety of bird species?

If the bird was suffering from an ailment, did the veterinarian do follow-ups?

If you receive general positive feedback about the particular exotic veterinarian, make an appointment.

#### At The Vets

They say first impressions are lasting impressions, so when its time for your appointment, go early to check out the veterinarian's office. It should be clean and well-organized, and the staff friendly and ready to assist you.

The facilities should be well-equipped to treat birds, and have items such as a gram scale, incubators, a radiograph machine (X-rays), laboratory as well as a clean and organized surgery room. Don't be afraid to ask for a tour of the facilities.

#### Questions To Ask The Vet

1. How long have you been an avian veterinarian?

2. Do you have birds of your own?

3. Do you offer emergency care?

4. What are your rates?

5. How often do you recommend check-ups?

(A vet should recommend check-ups at least once a year.)

While you ask your questions, observe the vet. Are they comfortable with your bird's species? Even the most experienced of people can be wary of parrots such as Amazons. Do they handle your bird with respect and confidence? According to "Complete Bird Owner's Handbook" your veterinarian should fulfill the "three C's...competency, communication and compassion..."

A well- bird check up typically includes your vet asking for a completely health history of your bird followed by a physical examination. Your vet should be able to gently and easily handle your bird and explain any diagnostics and/or treatment options in layman's terms.



Do they ask you questions? A good veterinarian wants an owner who will work with them on managing the bird's health. Do they ask you about your bird's health and lifestyle? A vet should be interested in your bird and make you feel confident in entrusting your bird's health in their care.