

Get the Whole Picture: Add a CBC to your preanesthetic testing protocol.

“Mini profiles provide value but often increase long-term costs and may fall short of minimizing risks. Therefore, we support evaluating a full CBC and biochemical profile before every anesthetic event.”

Kristin Tondra, DVM, MS



Many practices require diagnostic testing as part of their preanesthetic screening, including a chemistry six panel with electrolytes. However, rather than run a complete blood count (CBC), they perform only a packed cell volume (PCV) for the hematology profile.

The PCV can help determine if the patient is anemic but it cannot provide a comprehensive characterization of the anemia. The PCV also cannot provide information on whether or not platelets are adequate for surgery, the WBC is elevated or decreased, or what the distribution of whole blood cells might be.

The CBC provides essential, detailed information on the anemia as well as information on the following to help determine if the patient can undergo anesthesia with minimal or no complications through evaluation of all components of the blood.

Thrombocytopenia: The most common bleeding disorder in veterinary medicine; platelets must be evaluated in every preanesthetic profile.

Leukocytosis: May be associated with inflammation or a stress response that could intensify following routine dental or surgical procedures.

Leukopenia and Neutropenia: Patients may have difficulty in mounting an effective immune response postoperatively, and there may be severe, occult and overwhelming inflammation already present before surgery.

Anemia: Patients with anemia are more prone to tissue hypoxia, which increases the likelihood of anesthetic complications.

Polycythemia: Most commonly resulting from dehydration and may cause hypotension; when coupled with blood loss, could result in serious complications.

Early Detection • Early Intervention • Peace of Mind

“Perhaps the greatest value of doing a CBC as part of a preanesthetic panel is that it begins to form baseline data that can be used to follow your patient over the course of its lifespan... when it comes in for routine visits you have... a reference point from which to work.”

Alan Rebar, DVM, DACVP

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When the cost of preanesthetic testing is weighed against the benefits, the value becomes clear.

One of the strongest objections to adding a CBC to a young, well-patient's pre-anesthetic testing is that the veterinarians are concerned about passing the full charge of a complete blood count on to the pet owner. They believe there will be resistance and that their staff would spend too much time making the medically sound argument.

Because the information obtained from a CBC is extremely valuable in making the anesthetic evaluation and is a critical part of a patient's wellness journey, we suggest the following for ease of implementation:

- **Make it Simple**—Create another “reason code” in your system for a “young, well-patient preanesthetic diagnostic screening” that adds the CBC to the chemistry six panel with electrolytes and adjust your charges by only \$10 or \$15.
- **Practice Makes Perfect**—Discuss potential questions and answers with your staff regularly so they feel comfortable and have the information they need to answer clients' questions.
- **Be the Expert**—Practice with conviction and believe in the quality of medicine you are offering! Your clients expect it and your patients deserve it.

Sample ROI: Adding a CBC to a well-patient profile with adjusted pricing.

Example: A Typical Two-Doctor Practice						
	Added CBC	Your Cost	Sample Client Charge*	Sample Net Gain	Your Change	Your Net Gain
Each	1	-\$4.55	\$13.65	\$9.10		
Weekly	25	-\$113.75	\$341.25	\$227.50		
Monthly	100	-455.00	\$1,365.00	\$910.00		
Yearly	1200	-\$5,460.00	\$16,380.00	\$10,920.00		
Your Number						

(*Sample Pricing = 3x cost—but you decide what's right for your practice.)

“It is important to work together as a medical staff to reinforce the need for a complete diagnostic workup to adequately determine the health status of your patient. Make your medical recommendations with conviction—you can always adjust your charges for a young, well-patient workup versus a sick patient or a senior patient—you have the control.”

Dennis McCurnin, DVM, MS, DACVS

“When used optimally, preanesthetic testing and in-clinic diagnostics improve the quality of medicine you practice and generate monthly practice income. And, even better, test results give you a trustworthy way to document treatment success.”

Fred Metzger, DVM, MS, DABVP

If you have questions about preanesthetic testing, please contact your sales representative, call IDEXX at 1-800-355-2896 or visit us at idexx.com

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