

WV Board of Veterinary Medicine
The American Board of Veterinary Specialties
Effective April 24, 2024

A veterinarian may represent himself or herself as a specialist only if he or she is board certified. A veterinarian shall restrict claims for specialization to those disciplines for which there is a specialty board approved by a certifying agency recognized by the Board. A veterinarian may not use the term specialist for an area of practice for which there is not recognized certification. A diplomate of any certifying organization recognized by the Board may claim only a specialty for the class of animals in which he or she specializes, and not for medical specialties in which he or she is not board-certified. The Board shall annually, before January 1st, provide a list of approved certifying agencies for the next full calendar year.

Below is a list of AVMA- Recognized Specialty Organizations with a very simple descriptions of what these specialists do.

[Anesthesia and analgesia](#): veterinary specialists who are experts at assessment and mitigation of anesthetic risks, delivery of anesthetic and analgesic drugs, maintaining and monitoring physiologic well-being of the anesthetized patient, and providing the highest levels of perioperative patient care including pain management.

[Animal welfare](#): veterinary specialists with advanced training and experience in animal welfare.

[Behavior](#): veterinary specialists with advanced knowledge of animal behavior and behavior modification.

[Dentistry](#): veterinarians who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of dental, oral, and maxillofacial diseases.

[Dermatology](#): veterinary specialists with advanced training and expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of allergy and diseases affecting the skin, ears, nails and/or hooves of animals.

[Emergency and critical care](#): veterinary specialists who work exclusively in both emergency rooms and intensive care units to care for animals that are often the "sickest of the sick".

[Internal medicine](#), which includes specialties of:

- Cardiology: veterinary specialists who diagnose and treat conditions of the heart and circulatory system.
- Internal Medicine: veterinary specialists trained to manage complex medical problems or disease conditions affecting multiple body systems.
- Neurology: veterinary specialists who diagnose and treat diseases of the brain, spinal cord, and other parts of the nervous system.
- Oncology: veterinary specialists who diagnose and treat cancer.

[Laboratory animal medicine](#): veterinary specialists working in research or in practice, making sure laboratory animal species (rabbits, rats, mice, etc.) receive proper care.

Microbiology: Veterinarians who specialize in research, teaching, and/or diagnosis of infectious diseases. Specialties include:

- Virology
- Immunology
- Bacteriology/Mycology
- Parasitology

Veterinary nutrition: veterinary specialists dedicated to the research and the clinical application of nutrition and diet in health and disease.

Ophthalmology: veterinary specialists who study diseases and conditions of the eye.

Pathology: veterinary specialists practicing microscopic and clinical pathology to protect and improve animal, human and environmental health to benefit society.

Pharmacology: veterinary specialists who study how medications/drugs affect animals.

Poultry: veterinary specialists who work with chickens, turkeys, ducks, and other fowl, usually in food production settings.

Preventive medicine: veterinary specialists improving animal, human, and environmental health through surveillance, recognition, outbreak investigation, and management of animal diseases; prevention and control of zoonotic diseases and foodborne illnesses; reduction of bites, injuries and other environmental and occupational human health hazards related to animals; promotion of food protection and wholesomeness; and promotion of humane animal care and the use of animals in animal-facilitated therapy.

Radiology: veterinary specialists who focus on the study of x-ray, ultrasound, computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and other imaging procedures that allow us to see "inside" an animal's body; radiation oncologists specialize in the treatment of cancer patients using radiotherapy.

Sports medicine and rehabilitation: veterinary specialists who focus on returning animals to normal function after injury, lameness, illness, or surgery.

Surgery: veterinarians who specialize in performing surgery. A certified surgeon will be certified in either small animal or large animal surgery. Within these groups, many surgeons will focus their work in a sub-category, but they are not limited to them:

- Orthopedics: these surgeons focus on the bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, and tendons that make up the body's skeletal system.
- Soft Tissue surgery: these surgeons focus on the internal organs and non-bone tissues of the body.
- Neurosurgery: these surgeons focus on the brain, spinal cord and other parts of the nervous system.

Theriogenology: veterinary specialists who diagnosis and manage conditions affecting animal reproduction.

Toxicology: veterinary specialists who study the effects of poisons and other toxic products on the body (and how to treat animals affected by these toxins).

Veterinary practitioners: veterinary specialists with extensive and advanced training in specific animal species and practice areas:

- Avian Practice (birds)
- Equine Practice (horses)
- Beef Cattle Practice (cattle raised for meat)
- Feline Practice (cats)
- Canine and Feline Practice (dogs and cats)
- Exotic Companion Mammal Practice (ferrets, rabbits, mice, rats and other small mammals often kept as pets)
- Food Animal Practice (cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs)
- Dairy Practice (cows that produce milk)
- Reptile and Amphibian Practice (snakes, lizards, salamanders, turtles, etc.)
- Shelter Practice (diverse population of animals in a shelter setting)
- Swine Health Management (pigs)

Zoological medicine: veterinary specialists who work with zoo collection animals, free-living wildlife, aquatic species, and companion zoological animals.