



What Exactly is a Veterinary Technician Specialist?

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In the last 15 years I have seen vast advancements in specialty veterinary medicine, but the most substantial progression observed has been the growing interest among veterinary technicians to attain a higher level of recognition for advanced knowledge and skills. Veterinary Technician Specialists are an essential asset to the veterinary healthcare team. These veterinary technicians have made the extra effort to increase their knowledge in their particular field of interest. To attain specialty credentials, technicians must not only pass the written exam, but must also complete advanced training, continuing education, work experience, case reports and case logs. They must also demonstrate advanced skills and knowledge under the supervision of board certified veterinarians or other specialists in the field. The guidelines for each VTS discipline have been created by NAVTA (National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America).

Academies approved by NAVTA for VTS credentials are:

- The Academy of Laboratory Animal Veterinary Technicians and Nurses
- The Academy of Veterinary Technicians in Anesthesia and Analgesia
- The Academy of Veterinary Behavior Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Clinical Pathology Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Technicians in Clinical Practice
- The Academy of Veterinary Dental Technicians
- The Academy of Dermatology Veterinary Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Technicians
- The Academy of Equine Veterinary Nursing Technicians
- The Academy of Internal Medicine for Veterinary Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Nutrition Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Ophthalmic Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Surgical Technicians
- The Academy of Veterinary Zoological Medicine Technicians

As an Oncology technician with a VTS, I was certified by the Academy of Internal Medicine for Veterinary Technicians (AIMVT). Veterinary oncology technicians work with boarded veterinarians to prepare animals for chemotherapy and radiation treatments. We will also help diagnose and treat oncology patients. In addition, we must balance treating the animal, monitoring discomfort, as well as tending to the owner's emotional needs. A large portion of my day is spent observing patient behavior, gentle restraint during exams and procedures, collecting samples if needed, running various laboratory tests and administering chemotherapeutic agents. Most veterinary oncology technicians' work in specialty clinics and hospitals, but some may work in laboratory settings. Having such a high level of expertise and experience ensures that patients and clients receive the utmost in care; it's a great accomplishment!

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