

# Caring for Stray Dogs & Cats in Istanbul

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PatiSev Veterinary Clinic was founded in 2012 as a boutique small animal clinic near Istanbul—the most populous city in Turkey and the country's economic, cultural, and historic center.

One part of Istanbul lies in Europe and the other part in Asia; this creates a bridge between 2 continents. There are 17 million residents and 650 small private animal clinics.

PatiSev is situated in Atasehir, a highly populated suburb on the Asian side of Istanbul. There are many parks, which provide a place for dog owners to walk their pets. However, cats are more popular pets in this area because most residents work full-time.

## Practice Overview

Veterinary services are provided by 2 veterinarians with assistance from a veterinary nurse. The clinic is open daily from 10 AM to 8 PM and does house calls for any emergencies.



The facility includes an operating room, an intensive care unit, and a laboratory that performs blood work analysis, chemistry, cytology, and hematology. Digital radiography is used for rapid diagnosis. There are also facilities for dental surgery.

Thanks to good relationships with veterinary specialists, PatiSev consults with them in cardiology, orthopedics, oncology, and general surgery cases.

## Common Health Issues

The most concerning pet health issues in the region include infectious diseases such as GI parasites (eg, *Ascaris* spp, *Taenia* spp, *Isoospora* spp, *Giardia* spp); other parasitic infections (eg, ear mites); viral infectious diseases (eg, canine distemper virus,



canine coronavirus, canine parvovirus, feline coronavirus, feline herpes virus, feline panleukopenia virus, feline calicivirus); and bacterial infections.

PatiSev mostly deals with infectious diseases, fungal and parasitic dermatologic disorders (eg, dermatophytosis, *Demodex*, *Sarcoptes scabiei*), soft tissue surgeries, open-wound treatment, dental surgeries, ophthalmic emergencies, physical treatment with neuromuscular electric stimulation, and blood transfusions in cats and dogs.

### **Istanbul & Stray Animals**

Istanbul is famous for its stray cats and dogs. They are protected by laws, and usually people take care of them on the streets (eg, by feeding them, sometimes by providing much-needed shelter). There are shelters, operated by local municipalities, that spay and neuter stray cats and dogs. Because these shelters only provide spay/neuter services, people bring sick stray cats and dogs to private clinics in order to receive treatment.

PatiSev provides spay/neuter, preventive care, and adoption services for many stray cats and dogs. Most stray cats have health issues (eg, parasitic infections, infectious diseases); PatiSev has 10 separate cages for long-term hospitalization,

parenteral treatment, and close observation. Fortunately, the clinic has access to various analgesics and anesthetics.

Because of the vast number of stray animals, people tend to adopt cats and dogs from the streets. Domestic pet breeding is not preferable or necessary, and pet owners prefer to have their cats and dogs spayed/neutered. Most clients bring pets in regularly for vaccinations and antiparasitic treatment.

The clinic provides adoption services for stray animals; team members photograph them and use social media to find them homes. Since opening, the clinic has found homes for 470 cats and 10 dogs. Team members have spayed/neutered more than 800 stray animals (mostly cats) and returned them to relatively safe public places where people will care for them. The team is delighted that 40% of clients adopt their cats and dogs from the practice. PatiSev is also home to 3 rescue cats (Tom, İklim, and Sariseker), 2 of which have paralysis. The clinic also adopted 2 stray dogs, Nepal and Hachiko. ■■■

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